MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

DECEMBER 2002 • ANTIWAR SPECIAL ISSUE • #235 • $3

THE INEVITABLE WAR?

plus:
KYLESA
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?
brazilian tour diary part deux!
SMALLTOWN

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

For what it's worth (not much), here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so...) lists of stuff we review.

TIM BROOKS

- PHOENIX FOUNDATION-Don't Be Fooled-EP
- FLAKES-both 45s
- RIPCORD-Discography Part 1-LP
- FLIPTOPS-All Worked Up-LP
- XFILESX-ABC Mayhem-EP
- RIISTETERROR-Taabajara Hardcore-EP
- CRESS-2xLP
- HORRORCOMIC-I Don't Mind-EP
- NOW-Development Corporations-EP
- RUDI-The Pressure's On-EP

ROB COONS

- V/A-Tommorow Will Be Worse Vol. 3-3xEP
- V/A-Six Weeks Omnibus Vol. 2-LP
- X-RAY SPEX-Plastic Fantastic-LP
- ROBOT HAS WEREWOLF HANDS-EP
- SKIT SYSTEM/NASUM-split EP
- SHORT FUSE-Blow My Fuse-EP
- V/A-Thrash Ahoy Extra-CD
- DRI-1983-1985-LP
- RIPCORD-Discography Part 1-LP
- XFILESX-ABC Mayhem-EP

ARWEN CURRY

- LA FRACTION-Aussi Long Sera-LP
- EX-CATHEDRA-2x4=-LP
- QUAILS-LP/INTELLECTUALS-EP
- HICKEY/FUCKFACE/FUCKBOYZ/MIAMI
- DEAD MOON-live/PUNKIDS. S.-EP
- CRESS-Greed Machine-2xLP
- ANTI DIFRANCOS/ASS END OFFEND-split EP
- APATIA NO!-Cuando El Rumor-EP
- LIPSTICK PICKUPS/BIKINI BUMPS-split EP
- TRI-CITY THUNDERCATS-Technology-EP

JONATHAN FLOYD

- APATIA NO!-Cuando El Rumor-EP
- V/A-20 Years of Dischord-3xCD
- MODEY LEMON-live
- FIFTH HOUR HERO/GUNMOLL-split LP
- SIN DIOS/INNER CONFLICT-split EP
- BASEBALL FURIES-Greater Than Ever-LP
- V/A-Six Weeks Omnibus Vol. 2-LP
- BOOM BOOM KID-Okey Dokey Dok-LP
- VON BONDIES-live
- SKIT SYSTEM/NASUM-split EP

JEFF HEERMANN

- SHOCKS-More Cuts for You-LP
- SIMPLETONES-I Have a Date-LP
- MUSIC MACHINE-turn on-LP
- FALL-Live at the Witch Trials-LP
- LYRES-live
- FLAKES-First I Look at the Purse-45
- DISGRUNTLED NATION-Small Town-EP
- CASHIERS-live
- VON LMO-Tranceformer-2xLP
- THIS ROBOT KILLS-LP

KENNY KAOS

- PUNKIDS. S.-The First No Family-EP
- FLIPTOPS-All Worked Up-LP
- RUDI-The Pressure's On-EP
- INTELLECTUALS-Boring Town-EP
- KILLAWATTS-Microwave My Heart-EP
- SIMPLETONES-I Have a Date-LP
- REVOLVER/DUANE PETERS-split LP
- RIFFS-Underground Kicks-LP
- NY REL-X/ANTIDOTE-split EP
- FLAKES-First I Look at the Purse-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- MR. AIRPLANE MAN-LP/FLAKES-both 45s
- FLIPTOPS-LP/DIRTY FINGERS-EP
- BASEBALL FURIES-Greater Than Ever-LP
- COOL JERKS-LP/CHEATER SLICKS-CD
- STUD COLE-45/LYRES-live
- LOTTIE COLLINS-Runaway-45
- INTELLECTUALS-Music for Haters-EP
- SIMPLETONES-I Have a Date-LP
- DIRTBOMBS/R-N-R ADVENTURE KIDS-live
- JEWWS-live/BLOWTOPS-LP

DULCINEA LOUDMOUTH

- BLACK KEYS-The Big Come Up-LP
- COOL JERKS-Cleaned A Lot of Plates-LP
- BASEBALL FURIES-Greater Than Ever-LP
- BLOWTOPS-Black Static-LP
- SHOCKS-More Cuts for You-LP
- SIMPLETONES-I Have a Date-LP
- FLAKES-both 45s
- KILLAWATTS-Microwave My Heart-EP
- INTELLECTUALS-Boring Town-EP
- DIRT BOMBS-live

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Available back issues are listed on the page after next. Prices as above in subscription info.

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is back!!! Go to: www.maximumrocknroll.com/radio

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
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1/3 page square: (5" x 4 7/8") $100
1/2 page: (7 1/4" x 5") $150
Full page (7 1/4" x 10") $400

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We will not accept major label or related ads, or ads for comps that include major label bands. We reserve the right to refuse ads for any reason at any time. Send ads on paper, properly sized.

CLASSIFIEDS: $2 for a maximum of 40 words. No racist, sexist or fascist material. Send typed if possible.

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Fax (415) 923-9617
maximumrnr@mindspring.com
(use this mainly for comments & letters. Use phone for ads & other business stuff)

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible–one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only release. See records section for where to send tapes.

RAY LUJAN

- TRAVOLTAS-Endless Summer-CD
- ALL SYSTEMS GO-Mon Chi Chi-CD
- RUDI-EPs/FORGOTTEN-Control Me-LP
- SIMPLETONES-I Have a Date-LP
- DIGGER-Keystone-CD
- MALLRATS-Fall in Love-LP
- SEMA 4-4 From-EP
- PEAR OF THE WEST--CD
- SPITALFIELD-Clock and Dagger-CD
- FIFTH HOUR HERO/GUNMOLL-split LP

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

...is way too drunk to bother with this top ten garbage.

WILLIE NELSON

- ASSCHAPEL/WEAVINGTHEDEATHBAG-Live
- CRESS-2xLP/C.F.D.L.-LP
- V/A-Six Weeks Omnibus Vol. 2-LP
- SKIT SYSTEM/NASUM-split EP
- MUNICIPAL WASTE/BAD ACID TRIP-split EP
- ANTICHRIST-Seein' Black-EP
- FALL-Live at the Witch Trials-LP
- ANGSTZUSTAND-LP/XFILESX-EP
- BURY THE LIVING/DRAWBLANK-EP
- Matty Luv, R.I.P.

DONNA POOLE

- BASEBALL FURIES-Greater Than Ever-LP
- FLAKES-First I Look at the Purse-EP
- FLIPTOPS-All Worked Up-LP
- SUPERBEES-LP
- KILLAWATTS-Microwave My Heart-EP
- ROBOT HAS WEREWOLF HANDS-The Love-EP
- NOMADS-In A House Of Cards-EP
- CIRIL-Six Tails-EP
- SOME GIRLS-The Rains-EP
- FIND HIM & KILL HIM/THE DREAM IS DEAD-split EP

BRUCE ROEHRS

- ANTiSEEN-Drastic/N.C. Royalty-EPs
- ANTIDOTE-LP & EP/EXCESSIVES-CD
- COCKNOOSE-LP/NIHILISTICS-LP
- CLASH DOGS-Bite the System-EP
- LIFE ALIVE-The Winning Hand-45
- SHOCKS-More Cuts for You-LP
- FORGOTTEN-LP/THROWBACKS-EP
- TOMMY & THE TERRORS-On The Run-EP
- BASEBALL FURIES-Greater Than Ever-LP
- V/A-Tributo Ao Olho Seco-LP

MIKE THORN

- SKIT SYSTEM/NASUM-split EP
- APATIA NO!-EP/DISGRUNTLED NATION-EP
- KILLAWATTS-EP/17TH CLASS-EP
- SIN DIOS/INNER CONFLICT-split EP
- PHOENIXFOUNDATION-EP/MEANWHILE-EP
- POLIKARPA Y SUS VICIOSAS-EP
- CRESS-2XLP/STOCKHOLM PIGS-10"
- BURY THE LIVING/DRAWBLANK-EP
- RIISTETERROR-EP/V/A-20 Years of Dischord-3xCD/SHOCKS-LP

RYAN WELLS

- INTELLECTUALS-Boring Town-EP
- HIDE AND GO FREAK-It's My Party-EP
- VON LMO-Tranceformer-2xLP
- HORRORCOMIC-I Don't Mind-EP
- FLAKES-Jerk Store-45
- FALL-Live at the Witch Trials-LP
- BLOWTOPS-Blackstatic-LP
- TRI-CITY THUNDERCATS-Technology-EP
- FLAKES-First I Look at the Purse-45
- PUNKIDS. S.-The First No Family-EP

ZINE TOP TEN

- Chihuahua & Pitbull #1
- Leaves of Ass #1
- Everlong #3
- Faggo #3
- Game of the Arseholes #5
- Journal Song #5
- The Match #98
- Negrita #2
- Angerbox #3
- Cherrybomb #1

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#148/Sept '95. Soda Jerks, Toe Rag, Thorazine, Sacred Straight, Wizo, Opposition Party, Moody Jackson, Adversives, Opcion Crucial, Rebel, Rebel, Teen Idols, Walking Ruins.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#152/Jan '96. Delilah Jacks, Battalion of Saints, Bottom Feeders, Turbonegro, Murder Junkies, Junior, Assfort, Retch Records, Com-Fract, Dead End Kids.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#155/Apr '96. "Holy Bible" issue. Hockey Teeth, Turnips Surfin, Pussy Crush, Cro Mags, High Plains Drifters, Slight Slappers, Third Degree, Anti-Flag, Knights of Malta.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#157/June '96. Against All Authority, The Criminals, Wardance, Heroines, Brain Brats, Rudiments, Chinese Millionaires, Sons Of Hercules, Your Mother, Yellow Scab.

#158/July '96. Workin' Stiffs, The Gain, Ashley Von Hurter, Haters, The Process, Brother Inferior, Judge Nothing, Break-ups, Not For Rent.

#159/Aug '96. Smugglers, Brand New Unit, Tone Deaf Pig-Dogs, Round Ear Spocks, David Hayes/Very Small Recs, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Death Wish Kids, Fun People, Fat Drunk & Stupid.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#169/June '97. Hand Skin, Cluster Bomb Unit, Jihad, Purgen, Speed Queens, Remission, Halflings, The Old Man, Deface.

#170/July '97. Bristle, Mine, Tedio Boys, The 4 Cockroaches, Absconded, Meanwhile. Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hoodrat.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#173/Oct '97. Hot Water Music, Fat Day, Los Tigres Guapos, Les Partisans, Bristols, My 3 Scum, Space Shits, Pessimiser Recs, Reclusives, Nick Qwik.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#177/Feb '98. Superfly TNTs, Submachine, Dropout, Society Gone Madd, Pinhead Circus, Ann Beretta, Blackbird, Naive, Useless ID, Quarantine.

#178/Mar '98. Economics issue. Forgotten Rebels, Dirtys, Josh Collins, American Steel, Letterbombs, Gyogun Rend's, Go-Devils, Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, Garage Rats

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, Stiletto Boys, All Bets Off, Bonecrusher, Summerjack, Cell Blck 5, DDI, Normals, Pirate Radio issue.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Marauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City , Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#211/Dec '00. Fly & Seth Tobocman, Anti/Dogmatikss, Hissyfits, Aus Rotten, Media Blitz, Rocks, Hospital Food, Falsies, White Stripes, 9 Shocks Terror, Tijuana Bibles.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencíon 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct. '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Oct. '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead

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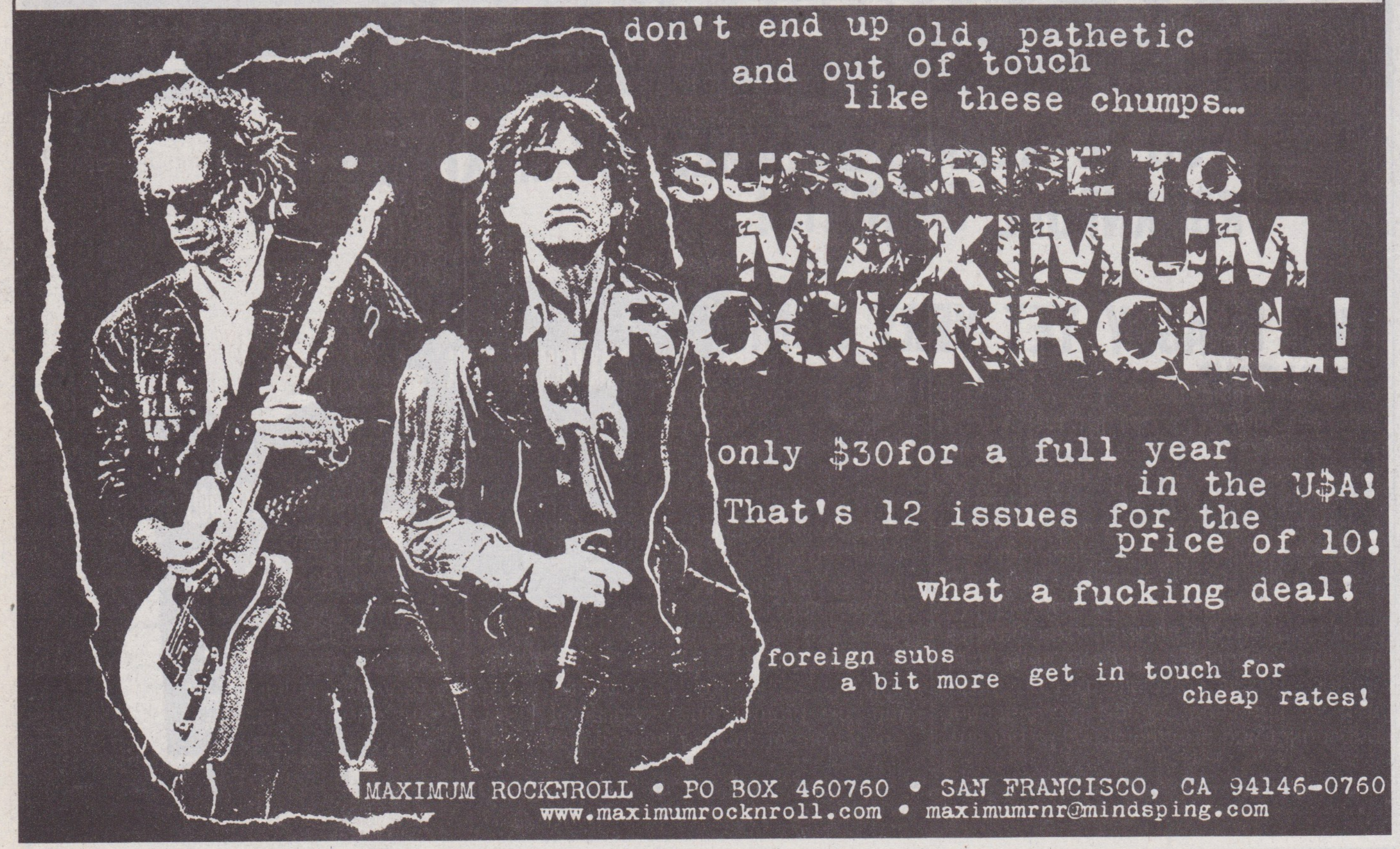

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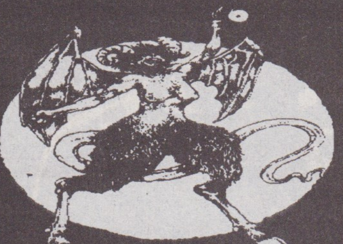

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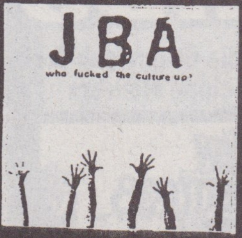

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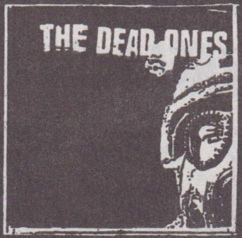

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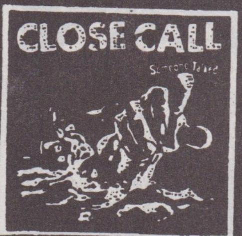

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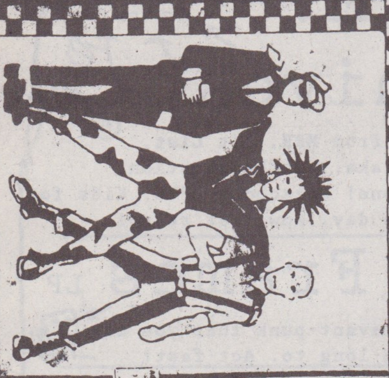

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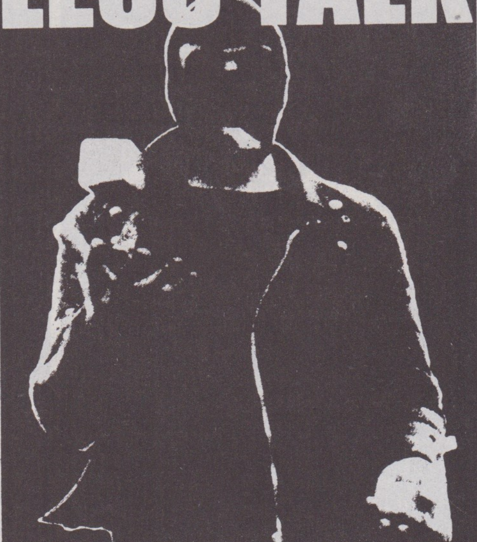

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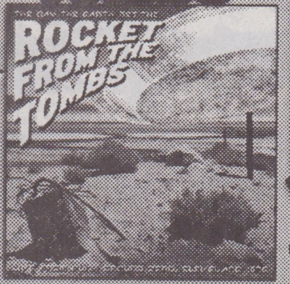

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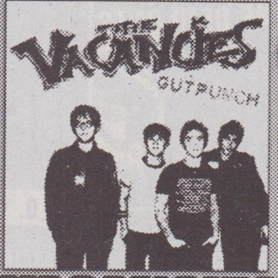

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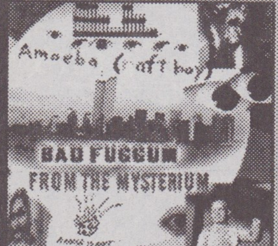

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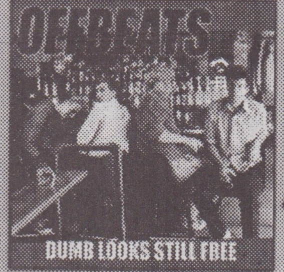

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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to maximumrnr@mindspring.com. No response guaranteed.

MRR-

What the fuck can you say about the early death of an unparalelled cultural terrorist, a musical genius, a consummate antihero? Can we say he died too young, even though he devoted a pretty good chunk of his writing to tell of how he didn't belong in this world? Can we say he's just another casualty of an "evil" drug, even though his person, his intellect and his body of work have impacted our community far more than the vast majority of ghostlike casualties who succumb to heroin every year? Is there something sadder and scarier on a deeper level than our usual glossed-over, standard reaction to this sort of news when it's someone like Matty Luv who has died, someone who, for fuck's sake, seemed too smart to kill himself? Yes. This is far too sad. I didn't know Matty all that well, but what of him I did know I carried with me like a big fat 40oz of inspiration that never ran out or got flat, and for that I loved him a lot. He was one of my biggest heroes, and he saved punk rock for me. He reminded me that caustic laughter, musical innovation, superintelligence, real community mindedness, sweetness, proper grammar and spelling, and a guitar that sounds like a fucking jet engine are still intrinsic in the music I love - Music that I thought had been taken over by boneheads before I saw Hickey for the first time. Plus, I must owe the guy at least $200 for cigarettes I bummed.

What the hell are we going to do without Matty Luv? He was too sweet to live, and too tough to ever really die.

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Dear Maximum Rock-n-Roll-

I am writing this letter partially in response to MRR Nov. '02's column by Anonymous Boy regarding safe sex, education and HIV, and partially in response to the recent death of beloved local punk rocker and needle exchange pioneer Matty Luv (RIP). In his column, Anonymous Boy wrote, "You would imagine that (heroin's) legacy of destruction should be more than enough to convince everyone to stay away." Sid & Nancy, Kurt Cobain, Dee Dee Ramone; the list goes on. But he's right; it's not. Just like smoking, eating red meat, and driving without a seat belt, the dangers of heroin use are well known but knowledge is not enough. People have pain, and, like it or not, heroin provides the most potent painkiller ever known. Even as it destroys peoples lives, heroin numbs their pain and, to a suffering soul, nothing could be more seductive than pure anesthesia.

So, Anonymous Boy asks, what can be done about it? He discusses needle exchange, reality based sex/drug education and harm reduction (reducing the harmful impact of drug use without necessarily reducing the drug use), all of which I commend. On a technical note, he mentions using cleans cottons/cookers but fails to mention why- namely to prevent the transmission of hepatitis C which, by the way, we don't know if bleach kills as effectively as it does HIV. As someone coming into contact personally and professionally with lots of junkies, I have to say that my training in the HIV prevention in no way prepared me to meet injection drug using kids under 30 with a 50% rate of infection with hepatitis C who might not even live long enough to feel the effects of hep C, let alone HIV because they die so young from overdose.

So, this is what I want to write about: overdose. As much as it may smack of judgment, I would have to say that I agree with AB that with heroin, abstinence is the only safe option but, ironically, one of the biggest risks for overdose is trying to get clean. (Another risk is using the same amount after your ability to tolerate it decreases when you're sick, in jail, treatment, on methadone detox, or in an unfamiliar environment). I also know that relapse is an inevitable part of recovery (ever succeeded the first time you tried to kick coffee, cigarettes, sugar, or watching bad late nite TV?), and so have to account for this reality. The fucked part about all of this, thanks to the "War On (people who use/grow/sell but not those who profit from) Drugs" is that there is an enormous stigma attached to injection drug use, which pushes users into an often shameful shadow of secrecy. Having to use alone in order to hide their use puts people at increased risk of dying because when they OD, no one is there to do the simple things it takes to bring the person back from an overdose. All it takes is calling an ambulance, (9-1-1 in the US), and giving the person rescue breaths while you wait for the paramedics to arrive. So simple, and yet people die every other day in San Francisco of overdose because no one is there, or they don't know what to do and are afraid of calling 9-1-1 for fear of arrest, even though the cops only come to backup the paramedics, not to arrest people 99% of the time. I have a whole curriculum on this written out so if you want a copy I can send it to you, but I just wanted to get out there some of the basics:

What is an overdose?

- When someone overdoses on downers (alcohol, heroin, pills, GHB), their body gets overwhelmed; their breathing slows and eventually stops altogether.
- When someone overdoses on uppers, (speed/methamphetamine, cocaine, ecstasy), their heart rate, body temperature and blood pressure rise until they go into seizures, have a stroke or a heart attack, and their heart stops altogether.

What should I look for? What should I do?

- If you see someone passed out, blue/grayish, with shallow breathing (on downers), or snoring really loud/gravelly, try to wake them up by shaking them, and calling their name. If they're unresponsive to noise or pain, call an ambulance. Tell them the person isn't breathing and/or doesn't have a pulse. You don't have to mention drugs. Just stay calm and tell them where you are.
- If they're not breathing but still have a pulse, tilt their head back, give them two slow breaths, watching the chest to see if it rises and falls, and then one breath every five seconds, pinching the nose and covering the mouth to make a seal while you breathe for them, and then letting go in between.
- If they're not breathing and don't have a pulse, begin CPR, giving 15 chest compressions and two slow breaths

until they come to or the ambulance comes.

• Do NOT inject them with speed, cocaine, saltwater or milk. It won't help.

• Do NOT put the person in a cold bath, they could go into shock or drown.

• If they're overdosing on uppers at a party, cooling them down with wet towels is okay, just don't dunk anyone underwater!

Why does an overdose happen?

The three main things that contribute to overdose are:

1) Quality- with street drugs you never know what you're getting.

2) Tolerance- the body's ability to cope with a drug changes over time. People are at highest risk after getting out of jail, treatment, while on methadone detox, and when sick or in an unfamiliar environment. Tolerance also decreases as the body ages.

3) Mixing-drugs with similar effects (uppers vs. downers) are much stronger in combination than alone. The most common deadly combo is alcohol, heroin and pills. Also, mixing heroin with cocaine is associated with overdosing more often.

What can I do about it?

The best ways to prevent overdose are to:

• Use with a friend that will call an ambulance and breathe for you. Learn how to do the rescue breathing, in case someone ODs on you

• Be careful with mixing downers, and heroin with cocaine. Use one drug at a time, instead of five or six.

• Use less after getting out of jail, hospital or treatment; or when sick or in an unfamiliar environment.

• Do tester shots. Do a little, take off the tourniquet, see how you feel before pushing the rest of the plunger in. Like Santa Cruz Needle Exchange sez: two holes in your arm are better than one in the ground.

• If you can, get your hands on some Narcan. This is the stuff paramedics give someone to temporarily reverse the effects of an opiate overdose. You can shoot it into your friends when they're overdosing. Just be careful to keep an eye on them cuz it wears off and they could go out again. Don't let the person do another shot even though they'll be dopesick and pissed off. Keep them occupied for at least an hour or two.

We can only be responsible for our own lives but like they say in Australia, "Look After Your Mates." If you want more information on overdose, check out the websites below, or email me at thedopeproject@hotmail.com

DOPE stands for Drug Overdose Prevention and Education. I started this shit because I've lost too many friends. Many thanks to folks for inspiration and information, Heather Edney, Kristen Ochoa, Kyle Ranson, Quijuan Maloof, Ro Guliano, Matty Luv (RIP) and all the staff at The DOPE Project. Peace

http://www.overdoseprevention.org - good step by step instructions
http://www.killpeople.com/breathe - interactive overdose game
http://www.dancesafe.org - lots of info. on club/raver drugs
http://www.harmreduction.org - lots of good shit
http://www.drugpolicy.org - background, research, news
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http://www.harmreduction.org

Dear Maximum Rock n Roll-
Your elitist attitudes have gone too far this time! Your declaration of "Mohawk Summer" has drawn a line in the sand that you've crossed. [ed. note: huh?] First, mohawks were punk in, like, '77 and in England, but as Henry Fiat's Open Sore said, "England, now that's a place to hate." Every other raver wears the MRR endorsed 'do. Good call. Saying mohawks are cool is like saying Catharsis is punk (M-E-T-A-L!!). Second, it's not even summer! You tried to make me a victim of your monopolization of style when it was like 50 derees out! If I have to wear long undies it ain't summer, dudes. [ed. note: this is San Francisco, not New Jersey]. Besides, everyone knows that the cool hairdo is "the Stan". If you don't know it, then you're not cool enough for me to explain. Up the Punx,
Dave Hyde/ 26 Lacona Dr/ Patterson/ NJ/12563
fightordie@hotmail.com

Dear Maximumrocknroll-
On the morning of August 24, 2002, twenty-eight anti-racist activists went to the Baltimore Travel Plaza to protest the neo-nazi organization "The National Alliance." Some two hundred racists were gathering there to meet before caravanning to their march and rally in Washington, D.C. later that day. As the activists entered the parking lot of the Travel Plaza, the group was confronted by several police cars. They attempted to return to their cars when suddenly they were surrounded by dozens of police cars and wagons. Held in the pouring rain for nearly an hour, they were eventually cuffed and brought to the police station. After hours of shivering on the floor of a conference room without being charged, they were transferred to Central Booking and held for almost twenty-four hours before receiving their papers. When they finally were allowed to see commissioners, some of them were released on their own recognizance while others received bail amounts upwards of $10,000. None of these activists had committed any crime, nor were they told what they were being charged with until after they had been interviewed. Bail was raised and all activists are now out of jail, but the legal battle is just beginning.

Later that night...

Baltimore police carried out a raid on a community center the activists were using to coordinate jail solidarity, without a warrant. They confiscated pamphlets and other literature. Immediately afterward, police surrounded a progressive activist center and attempted another warrantless search. The activists inside refused to talk to police and instead called the media. The police left the scene when the media showed up. Police then followed and pulled over cars traveling to and from these locations without providing reasons for the stops. Several people were pulled over at gunpoint for trying to reach these safe spaces. The BPD is going forward with their trumped up charges. Once again the police are protecting violent racists over the interests of our communities.

In addition to funds, the Baltimore Anti-Racist 28 are also in need of legal support. Any legal resources you can provide will be greatly appreciated and are desperately needed.

It is clear that the charges against the Baltimore Anti-Racist 28 and the harassment of the Baltimore Anti-Racist community are part of a larger attempt to silence the voices of committed activists. Due to the scale of media coverage and the various regions represented by the defendants, this case is important to everyone continent-wide who is opposed to nazi prejudices.

Accurate information on the charges and the police tactics and response to anti-racism must be disseminated. Corporate media accounts are based on the statements by the police and the National Alliance. Please spread the true message as far and wide as you can. Flyers, benefits, teach-ins, demonstrations, etc. are needed to assist the Anti-Racist 28 through their court cases.

The National Alliance claimed to police that they were confronted by anti-fascists in the morning. If so, they had been there and left well before the twenty-eight had arrived. The police decided to round up anyone in the

parking lot and are attempting to pin any real or imagined crimes the National Alliance racists complained of on these innocent activists. These anti-racist activists need your assistance as they are facing a combined total of about 1,177 years of jail time. Please donate to the Baltimore Anti-Racist 28 Legal Defense Fund. Many thousands of dollars will be needed by these brave and dedicated activists to fight these bogus charges. Much thanks to all of the great people who sent money for bail, but the serious costs will begin now. Every little bit counts.
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MRR-
It is with a very heavy heart but as an obligation to the many fans and friends of RAW POWER throughout the world that I have been asked to spread the news of the death of Giuseppe Codeluppi, founder of the Italian punk band, RAW POWER. He suffered a heart attack while playing soccer with his friends in Parma, Italy. I believe he was 45 years old.

RAW POWER were one of the first non-English European bands to make their mark by touring the USA incessantly during the 80's and 90's and as recently as 2001. They were also one of the first "crossover" bands (along with D.R.I., C.O.C.) combining the best elements of punk and metal together for the first time. They broke down doors and destroyed borders for many others to follow in their footsteps. Songs such as "Fuck Authority", "State Oppression" and "Burning the Factory" defined an attitude that many could identify with in spite of their citizenship. Giuseppe Codeluppi was not just the bands' guitarist since 1981 but he was the very heart and soul of RAW POWER and it is doubtful the band will be able to carry on without him. He will be missed.
For more information on their history, discography and photos visit their web-site:www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Alley/6165/
For letters of support and condolences, write his brother (the vocalist of RAW POWER), Mauro Codeluppi at mcodelup@tin.it
Thank you for your time,
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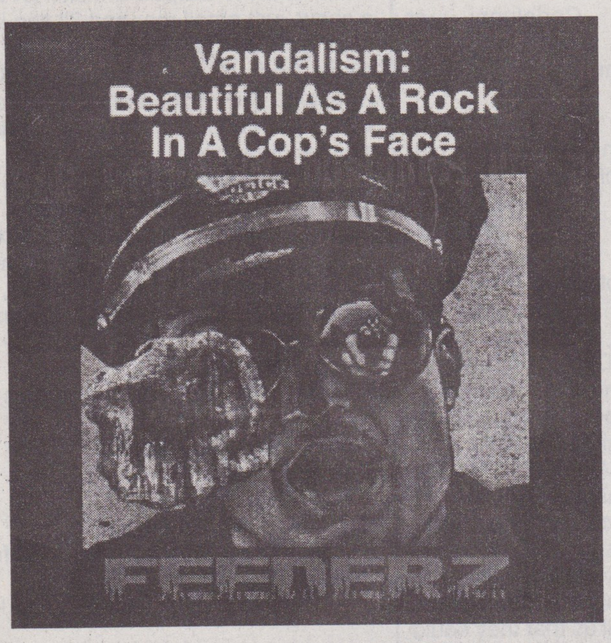
MRR/Tim Brooks-
Eddie Shots here from Band of Felons. I just read the review of our "Drown My Sorrows, Drink My Dreams" CD EP and I just wanted to say, godamn, you ripped us a new ass-hole about the packaging, Tim. We were as disappointed as Mr. Brooks by the packaging, but please allow me to explain. We worked really hard on putting together the CD cover, artwork and photos, and it looked pretty fucking good. But the company we had already paid for the printing had failed to tell us that they could not use the program we had used to design the whole thing. So we had to throw a new one together as soon as possible, explaining the "pixilated piece of crap" looking pictures.
As for Mr. Brooks' comment on how cheap CDs are to produce, it sure wasn't for us poor working class mother fuckers! At least Mr. Brooks seemed to like the music. which is basicaly what it's all about, isn't it? Anyway, thanks for your time reviewing our disc (and I know, I wish it were on vinyl too), and Tim's honesty, harsh and critical as it was.
Later, Eddie Shots
PO Box 38/South Amboy/NJ/08879

Hi MRR-
I heard in #233 there was a review for our 12" where the reviewer wrote AseRbia instead of Asebia, even in our address, so if you could put in a note or something it would make me less worried about lost mail and stuff. Thanks a lot,and you're doing a great thing here.
Andy
instigate82@hotmail.com

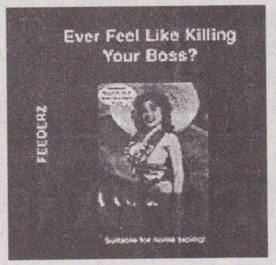
Hey MRR-
My name's Erik. Here's 15 bux for 5 issues of #207, and 5 of the newest issue, #232. Me and my buddy Shawn intend to sell 'em at shows. Last time I ordered a batch you sent me some free stickers and pins. That was cool, thanx! Oh, if any, I mean <u>any</u> bands want to come down to Corpus Chrisiti, TX to play a show, just email me, and I'll see if I can hook you up. We're about 2 1/2 hours away from San Antonio, and 3 from Houston. We've got a pretty good scene. We've got about 6 good local bands, and several other ones.

Oxymoron recently played here, with Pistol Grip, Blind Society (hella badass), and the Beltones. Also, recently, Pressure Point came. Dead Kennedys came a few months ago. Anyways, if any bands want a show, write me. Thanx and good bye.
Erik Lowery
theauthorofthebiblewasonshrooms@yahoo.com
Ship to my buddy's house:
Shawn Shircliffe
8001 Nazareth Dr.
Corpus Christi, TX 78413
PS If anyone wants a penpal feel free to write.@hotmail.com

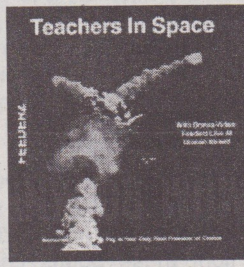
Dear *Maximum Rocknroll*-
After attending the KROQ "low dough show" 9/14/02 in Devore Ca [Sex Pistols, The Offspring, BR, etc...]. I have to say how impressed I was to see how many "White Power" skinheads showed up for the event brandishing their "White Power" tattoos and t-shirts like badges of honor. These awesome specimens of the "Superior Race" stood in unity intimidating all who opposed their presence. I was personally impressed by the onslaught of violence that was unleashed upon one wiry 14-year-old boy who had the gall to make a passing statement of protest.. Eight to ten of these "men" went to work on this little punk boy beating him into submission. Screams of horror and protest from his female companion earned her the beating she deserved as well. Their power and unity was most apparent when two full grown local security guards entered the scene. Scattering like scared schoolgirls, the skinheads ran off and offered no resistance when one of their "soldiers" was captured and removed. After all, two full grown men might be able to fight back! No one was called a coward when these "man" reconvened. Pats on the butt, "battle" wounds and stories were exchanged from their recent triumph. The rest of the day was spent looking for more victims. Not a small child female or possible mixed breed canine was safe. Sign me up boys! I'm sure my low IQ, and superior color would be an asset to your cause. However, I would first like to suggest a slight name change: "White Coward"?
Scott D.
Hollywood



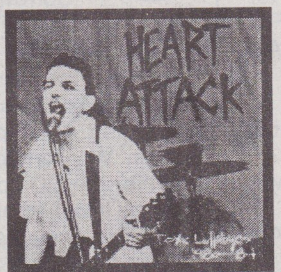
The new LP/CD CD comes with MP3s and the LP has different artwork than the CD



FEEDERZ 1st Release CD & LP) both come with sandpaper covers.



CD only comes with a computer file of infamous 1988 Gilman St. show.



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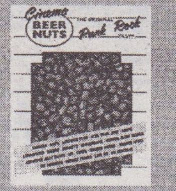

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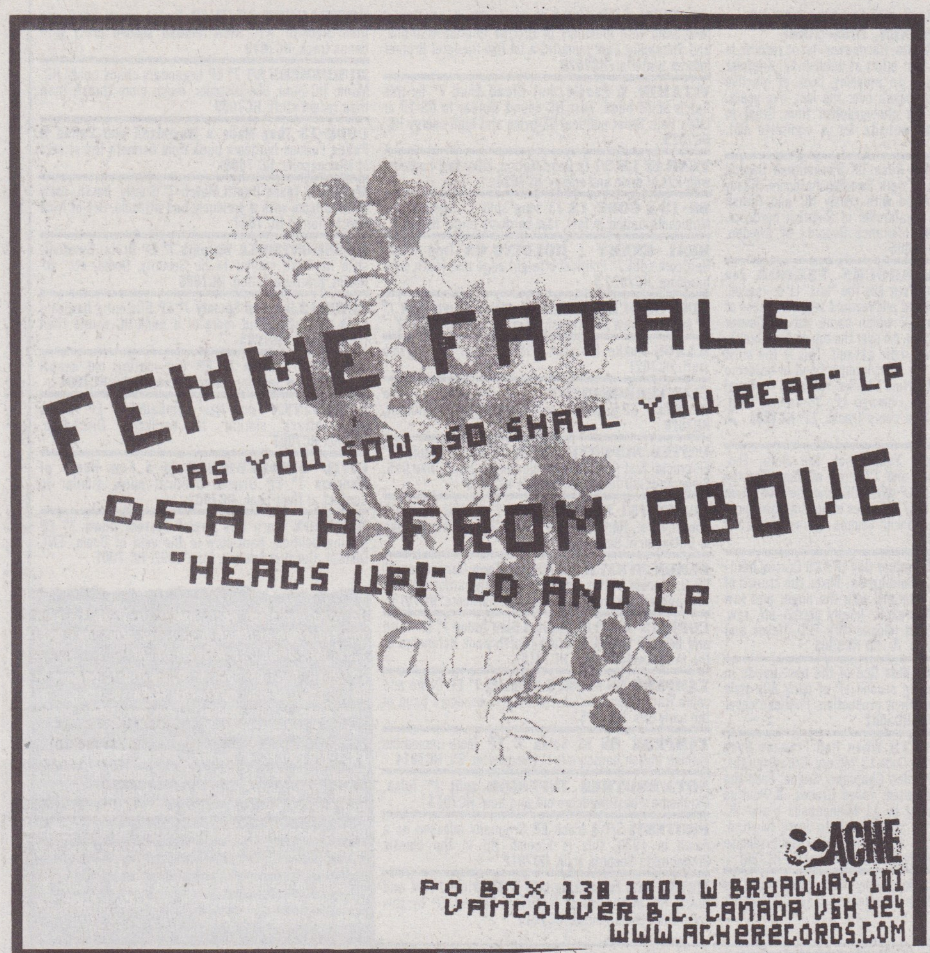

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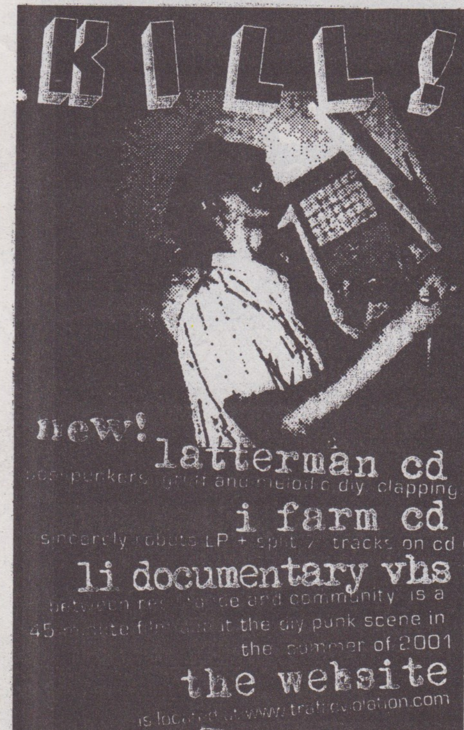

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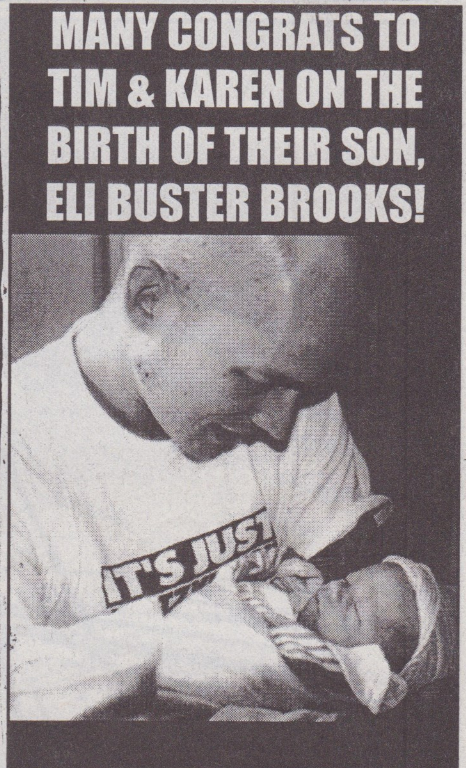

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IDENTITY PARADE: PHOTOGRAPHS BY KRISTOFER PASANEN, 1995–2000 150 Pages, Black & White, Hardcover Havoc records is proud to present our first effort at publishing. Kristofer Pasanen has compiled an amazing book of his live photographs of bands taken over the last five years. Hundreds of bands are photographed from Crust to SE to Emo; see the website for a complete list. **HC-IDP [BOOK]**

SKITSYSTEM Enkel Resa Till Rännstenen Second LP from the masters of dark Swedish hardcore. Heavy and brutal b-beat mixed with crusty HC and thrash styles. A pulverizing steamroller of Swedish hardcore. Split release with No Tolerance Records of Sweden. **LP HC1205 ☠ CD HC5005**

Now on CD! **NINE SHOCKS TERROR Zen and the Art of Beating Your Ass** The "lost" LP re-issued. This is a totally remastered and remixed second release of the hard to get first LP which came out on Devour Records of Japan in 1999. An over the top wall of thrash. Brutal no-holds-barred sonic assault. This is the most powerful material by the most intense band in hardcore today. CD contains all Nine Shocks' recorded material other than the Paying Ohmage LP. 38 tracks total, including all the 7" and comp tracks. **LP HC1204 ☠ CD HC5009**

MISERY The Early Years Incl. the Born, Fed, Slaughtered, Blindead, and Children of War 7"s, the Misery side of the split LP with SDS, and the Production Through Destruction LP. 71 Minutes of Amebix style apocalyptic crust. Split release with Crimes Against Humanity Records. **CD HC5004**

HOLDING ON Just Another Day LP / CD Crucial hardcore from Minnesota's Holding On! Mixes the crunch of Judge and Chain of Strength with the anger and raw power of Negative Approach. Totally pissed off, raw, powerful Hardcore! Split release with THD, Havoc and 1% records. **LP HC1203 ☠ CD HC5003**

DS•13 Killed by the Kids One of the best bands in hardcore today. Amazing second LP of early 80s-style thrash/ HC/ punk. Excellent production, Pushead cover art. **LP HC1202 ☠ CD HC5002**

VARIOUS ARTISTS When Hell Freezes Over Compilation LP Featuring Code 13, Misery, Dreadnaught, Onward To Mayhem, Arden Chapman, Segue, Feed the Machine, Scorned, Calloused, Fallen Graces, & Pontius Pilate. All new material by 11 Minneapolis punk/ HC bands. Styles vary from street punk, to crust, to grind, but it's all punk and all Minneapolis. Split release between Havoc, Sin Fronteras, and local bands. **HC1201**

CODE 13 Complete Discography 1994–2000 All the 7"s and comp tracks with one unreleased song. **CD HC5001**

ASSEMBLY OF GOD Submission Obedience Denial New band with members of Brother Inferior, Burnpile, and Subsanity. Fast punk/HC a lot like the later Brother Inferior material. **HC7026**

VITAMIN X People that Bleed Third 7" by this Dutch SEHC band. Fast HC sound similar to DS-13 or Life's Halt. Great political SE lyrics and high energy HC. **HC7025**

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CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE In a Few Hours of Madness 7" EP Diverse political punk, similar to Conflict at their peak. **HC7002**

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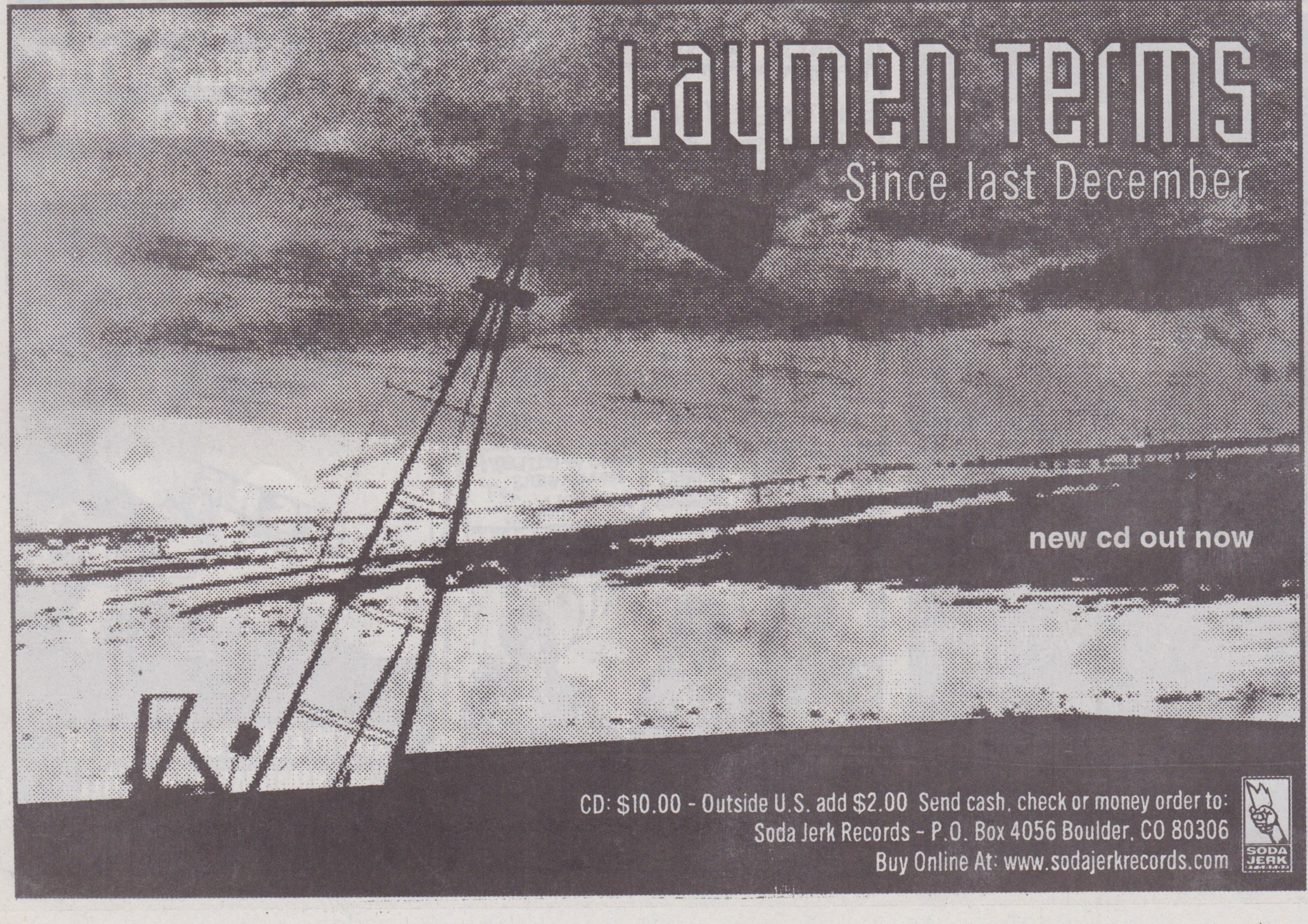


COLUMNS

So, there I was, wearing my clip-on tie. And my Nike All-Courts, jeans, and button-up shirt. With my "Publics" supermarket badge that had my name on it. "George Tabb: Bagboy." Late for work. I was kinda speeding up Highway 319 in Tallahassee, Florida, trying to get there before my boss noticed I was late, and then would take away my lunch break. Because, then, I couldn't go a few stores down to the bookstore, and oogle at the new *Penthouse* or *Playboy*. Anyway, so I'm speeding along, listening to the Ramones *It's Alive* album I recorded onto a cassette, which was now blasting through my Archer stereo system I got at Radio Shack for like really cheap. My dad's Datsun 510 was going pretty fast, and I was happy he had let me install a stereo into it. I remember the day I actually put the stereo into the car. He said, "George, I'll let you put that in the car, but just remember, it's my car, so therefore it's my stereo." Yeah, whatever, Dad.

So, "Today Your Love, Tomorrow The World" starts and I'm singing along. "I'm a nazi baby, I'm a nazi yes I am," I scream as I'm driving at about 55 in a 30 miles per hour zone. I figure there might be a chance I'm gonna make it to work on time. "Little German boy, being pushed around", I sing as I continue to travel fast. Then I saw her. On the side of the road. From behind. Blue-jean shorts. A white halter top. Long blonde hair. High tops. I was in love. As I passed her, I glanced in the rear-view mirror to check her out. I saw myself. In the stupid clip-on tie, and dopey sunglasses I'd borrowed from one of my sisters, so I could actually see in the blinding Florida sun. They were "My Little Pony" glasses. Little fucking cartoon horses all around the frames. I imagined myself stopping the car and saying hello to her. She'd see me in those glasses, and that tie, and laugh at me. Call me a dork. And she'd be right.

So I adjust the mirror so I don't have to look at the "My Little Pony" sunglasses, and check her out. She looked very cute, about my age, and someone who would definitely never give me the time of day. But I could always imagine. I was good at that. Girls never talked to me. Hell, I was 17, and had just reached puberty a few months earlier. I was just starting to get pubic hair. All the girls would say I was cute, or treat me like their damn little brother. It sucked.

So, I'm looking at her and listening to The Ramones, and, well, I kinda forgot I was driving. Maybe for only a second or two. But that's all it really takes. Really. So I decide, in my mind, to remember what she looks like. I had just discovered playing with myself, and she'd be good material. Fantasy. Because there was no way that would happen in reality. Anyway, I look forward again, out my windshield, and see a blue station wagon stopped about twenty feet in front of me. And it wasn't moving. And I'm going 55 miles per hour. And then I realize it's time to die. So I glance again in the rearview mirror as I hit the brakes, and I swear I see her smile.

But let me back up a bit. I got my driver's license when I was 16. On my birthday. In Connecticut. And by the time I was 16 and one day old, my dad grounded me, and told me I couldn't drive for a year. I think it was because I either didn't take out the trash, or didn't mow a certain part of the lawn. Whatever. My dad liked grounding me. And now that I could drive, he'd have more power over me. So, I wasn't allowed to drive.

Of course this really pissed me off, because I looked forward to the day I could drive since I was two. Being able to drive meant being able to get away from my fucking house with my fucking dad and evil step-mom. And now he had taken that away. I hated the guy.

One day, my father asked me if I wanted to drive his big "Suburban" station wagon downtown to a store to get him some dog food.

"I thought I was grounded", I said to him.

"You are, but if you want to drive, which I know you do, you can go to the store and get the dog food. It'll give you practice, and maybe one day, I'll let you drive on your own again."

I just looked at him. He wasn't gonna let me drive again. The day he'd lift the grounding, he ground me again. I knew the guy. That was his M.O. Being a power-playing fuckhead. But I played along, because I had nothing better to do, and I wanted to drive.

"OK," I said to him, "I'll go get the dog food, and I'll take my brother Seth with me, OK?"

"Good," said my father, "and you buy the dog food. Out of your allowance money. They are your dogs too, you know."

Doh.

My dad always liked to take my allowance too. But that's another story. So, me and Seth get into my Dad's station wagon, and head downtown to get some dog food. Kibble I think. I plug in my mini-cassette player into the lighter plug, and blast *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* soundtrack. That movie, and those songs, fucking rule.

We make it to the store and I get the damn dog food. I load it into the back of the car, and then Seth and I start to make our journey home. I turn on the tape player and sing along to "The Time Warp." As I back up this monster size station wagon, I see this stone wall behind me in the rearview mirror. It looked far enough away. But it wasn't. Suddenly, Seth and I go flying forward as I hit the stone fence and knock part of it down. Cool, I think to myself. Damage. Awesome.

We get out of the car, and I start to get afraid. What if I fucked up the back of the car. What if the stones knocked out the tail lights, or dented the damn thing. My dad would beat the shit out of me. I mean, of course he'd ground me for like ten years, but then the fists would fly. And I hated going to school with black eyes.

We go around to the back of the car, and the fence is completely knocked down. But the car looks fine. Nothing wrong at all. Well, except for the steel trailer-hitch, which my dad had installed so he could pull around his damn horses, the ones that shit too much, which I had to clean up after.

The hitch was a bit scratched. Just a bit. Nothing major, at all. In fact, I just rubbed it with my shirt a little, and it looked as good as new. Well, it was new. As was the car. My father had purchased it like only about a month or so earlier.

So, me and Seth start to make our way home, leaving the fence the way we hit it. Dumb rocks. We sing along to "Time Warp" and then "Sweet Transvestite," as I drive up Stanwich Road. As I'm driving, I kinda feel the car start pulling to the left a little. Then a lot. I kinda have to fight to keep the car on the road. Uh oh. I did something to it. But I don't say anything, and act totally normal in front of Seth, screaming "I'm just a sweet

Transvestite, from Transsexual, Transylvania" out the window.

We make it home, and go inside. My dad asked how his "new car" was running, and I said fine.

The next day my stepmom takes the car out to the supermarket, and has major trouble with it. She tells my dad it pulls to the left, and is majorly fucked up. My dad tries to drive the car, and it does it to him. He asks me if I had any trouble with it, and I tell him it ran like a charm. He believes me. He doesn't believe me when I tell him I'm not on drugs, not gay, not a male prostitute, that my mom and step dad in New York aren't heroin addicts, but he believes me now. A kid who has only driven twice, because of being grounded. Schmuck.

So, the idiot takes the car to the car dealer where he got it, and they tell him the A-frame is cracked. Destroyed. That the car is ruined. I'm with him. I kinda smile when he's not looking. They tell him they don't know how it happened, but it's my dad's fault, and not the car dealer. My dad, drives us both home, furious.

We go back into our house, and my dad starts to blame my stepmom. She blames him back, and they both get into a real fight. Fists and everything. I'm glad they are both hitting each other, and not me. Like they usually do. My dad blames her for breaking the car, and she blames him. It's great. Almost as good professional wrestling. Eventually, I get bored and leave to watch television. Cartoons were on, and the fight was getting boring.

Almost a year later, my dad let's me drive again. Well, a big drive. He did let me run some errands for him every once in a while, in the car, and I had no problems. I drove very carefully. It was fun. Driving was cool.

"George," my dad says, "how do you feel about a long drive?"

"Cool," I say to my dad. The more I got to drive, the more practice I'd have to make my big getaway one day.

"Good," he says, "Cause I'm moving the family down to Florida, and I want you to drive the truck with the horse trailer."

Moving? Florida? Doh.

It figures that he'd let me drive over two thousand miles, with eight horses, but wouldn't let me drive two miles to visit my friends.

So, again, I bring the *Rocky Horror Picture Show* on tape, and me and Seth listen to it all the way to Florida. That and the CB my dad had installed in the truck. See, he had my sister drive as well. Also, he drove, as did my stepmom. It was like the fucking Tabb Convoy. To Florida. We all drove on the highways together. My sister, in the Datsun 510, my stepmom, in the left-pulling Suburban with some horses, and me, in the pick-up, with some more horses, and my dad, in a U-Haul. Every once in a while I'd hear my dad's voice over the *Rocky Horror* tape say shit like, "This is big Tabb, come in little Tabbs, are you there, over?"

"This is Sweet Transvestite," I say into the CB mic, and my brother would laugh.

"George," I'd hear him yell, "Be serious, and stop being such a fag."

"10-4 there good buddy," I'd say, "What's up big T?"

"We need to make a stop. Sighted any bears?"

He'd say that with all seriousness. Like he was some trucker or something. He'd ask what my "20" was, and ask about police and shit. What a putz. I wish some real trucker would have kicked his ass. Now that, would be funny.

Anyway, we made it to Florida, where of course, the moment we got to our new place, I was again grounded. Punk Rock.

So, he didn't let me drive very much. Only errands for him. Not much happened except for once I ran over a puppy. But that's another story.

I eventually get a job bagging groceries at Publics, and my dad lets me use the car because I now have a job. Which means, of course, I can pay him rent. Fucker. Anyway, he lets me install a stereo into his Datsun 510 wagon, and I use it to blast Ramones, Dead Boys, and shit like that on the way to work every day. I was going to high school, and working almost 40 hour weeks. It kept me the hell out of my house.

So I'm making my way to work one day, and see this girl on the side of the road. I check her out through my sister's "My Little Pony" glasses, and wind up bashing into a car in front of me. Big time. I remember everything going into slow motion, as I slammed on the brakes. The car went into a skid, and out of control. The car in front of me didn't move, and I heard myself scream "Fuuuuuuucccccckkkkk!" as I hit the car dead ahead. Then I heard the crunching of metal, the screeching of tires, and of course, The Ramones. They were still there after everything else went quiet. "1-2-3-4, Today your love, tomorrow the world" Joey sang as I sat there in my clip-on tie and my dad's smashed car.

I got out of the car and walked around to the front of it. It was killed. Destroyed. The whole front end looked like an accordion. However, the car I hit, had no damage. At all. The guy who was driving it, got out and looked at his car, then at mine. I offered him my name, and insurance company, but he said it didn't matter. His car looked fine. As he told me this, I smelled all the booze on his breath. He didn't want any cops around. He was driving drunk.

So, he drives away, and leaves me in the middle of Highway 319 with a smashed car. My dad was gonna kill me. Dead. As I'm thinking this, the girl in the blue shorts walks by and smiles. I would have smiled back, if I hadn't been crying. I was dead.

Somehow the car makes it back to my parent's house, and my stepmom, who was taking a break from either fucking the handyman or riding her damn horses, takes a look at the car.

"Your dad is gonna kill you," she says, matter of factly. I start to cry again.

"He is gonna knock your lights out. Ground you forever. And you deserve it. You little shit."

Nice woman.

My dad gets home that night, sees the car, and freaks out. He storms into my room, where I'm hiding under the covers, knowing a beating is coming.

"The car," he says, face all red. His fists are shaking.

"I know," I say.

"You destroyed it. I should knock some sense into you", he yells.

Here it comes, I figure, he's gonna knock my lights out. Beat me up as usual. All because I had to look at some girl in nice blue shorts, blonde hair, and hightops. I feel myself start to get excited.

"Tell you what, George," my dad says, "instead of hitting you, I'm gonna throw you outta the house. Now. You cannot return home until that car is totally fixed."

"But where will I go?" I ask him, losing my erection.

"I don't care. You have five minutes. If you are not out, well," and then he started to shake and turn red again.

I got out.

I went to my friend Scott's house. Hung out with him, and his mother, who always wore her underwear around the house. She was kinda hot. But not hot enough. Although, I did think about it.

The next morning Scott and I took the car to a lot of repair shops. They wanted at least $500 bucks to fix the damn thing. They all told me the car was worth $300 because of the bad condition it was in and the rust.

I called my dad.

"Dad," I said to him, "they want $500 bucks to fix it. I have that much in my account. Saved for college. But the repair guys say it's only worth $300 bucks."

"So?" my dad said.

"I'll buy the car from you for $500 bucks. How is that?"

And for once in his miserable, greedy, asshole life, my dad was OK. He sold me the car for $500. As it turns out, he kept the insurance policy, and the car in his name, and eventually, got the car from me anyway. But it was mine, at least for a few months.

As soon as I got off the phone with my dad, I told Scott I owned the car. He slapped me five, and I slapped him back. Then, me, Scott, Scott's mom, and Scott's brother, Bill, went out into the parking lot, and with a chain around a telephone pole, and a couple of bolts, fixed the car. I backed it up, and pulled it straight. Bill put in some bolts, and the thing looked a-okay. Not good like a car place would have done, but, well, it looked punk rock. And it was fixed for free. Ha.

I went home a couple of days later and my dad saw the car. By this time I had painted the hood with a Batman Bat, installed green carpet into it I had found in a dumpster, and had huge speakers in the back from an old stereo.

"I want the car back," my dad said to me.

"You sold it to me," I said back to him, "You have my $500 dollars."

"I'll give it back, the car looks good, give it back to me."

But I didn't. And he didn't take it. Maybe for once in his stupid life, he was gonna let me be. Let me be a human being. With a sense of pride and worth. Maybe he'd be an OK guy. Let me have a car, and be whole. Let me be a regular 17-year-old who lived at home. Be me.

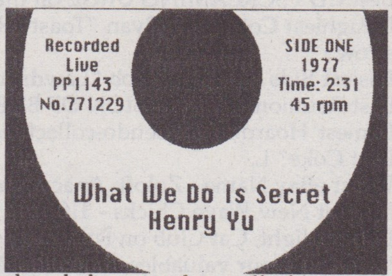
"OK, George," he said, "you keep the car, it's yours. Now go pick up your sister at school, get some dog food at the supermarket, then drive to my office and get my briefcase. And, oh yeah, you owe me $200 for the insurance. Plus, there's the rent, now that you are back home."

Take my life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. nowar@georgetabb.com
2. This whole idea of going after Iraq is so insane—I don't really know what to say. Remember, I was only feet away from the Twin Towers when they came down. I saw people jumping, splatting, dying, burning and being crushed to death. Lots of 'em. I'm now homeless 'cause of 9/11. If anyone should want revenge, it should be me. But Iraq is not the answer—just the first step in a new world order. This sucks. I'm scared—and not that I haven't always loved this country and what it has stood for...but it seems we are acting like "The Empire" from Star Wars. Who would have thought we'd be the "Dark Side" of the Force? Fuck this.

Yet Another RIP punk Rant



Punk, if you still consider it alive, is 25 years old, which is older than rock n roll was when punk first came along to turn it on its ear back in 1976. Rock n roll itself was initially synonymous with rebellion, but by its second decade became the stuff of targeted demographics, advertisements, self importance, 64-track quadrophonic, stadium tours, and corporate sponsorships. Punk by its very nature was meant to be a backlash, a wake up call, a call to arms, in the way Pop Art brought low art into the consciousness of high art, a phenomenon that could only be marked by a short period of time, not a quarter of a century.

Don't forget that punk was already first declared dead by the cognoscenti in 1980, ushering in the post punk era. I agree, if you consider that punk was an event, a thing that happened, a natural disaster. What has happened since then are merely the aftershocks, the reverberations, the wake. But don't get me wrong. These can be as or even more important and certainly far more reaching than the initial blast. But can we really still call it punk ?

You might be thinking to yourself, why the bother? After all, isn't punk just a style of music, fast and loud and fucked up ? And haven't there been bands been doing this style all this time? I think to define punk as a style misses the point of punk in the first place. Punk was a statement that you could Do It Yourself, that there were no boundaries between audience, fan, and musician, that originality and creativity and outrageousness were more interesting than talent, and it was anti-establishment and non-mainstream and it was by and for the disenchanted misfit youth. It was best summed up by the DESPERATE BICYCLES' mantra "It was cheap go and do it." Once the statement was made, punk was done. The torch was passed on.

So what has really been going on the past 20 years has been the aftershocks of punk. Grunge was an aftershock, or perhaps more accurately, a response to punk. Alternative Rock, College Rock, The Warped Tour, Lollapallooza, Doc Martens at Nordstrom's, Chain Wallets at the Hot Topic, black Levi's at JC Penney's. I'm surprised there aren't any tattoo parlors at the mall yet, or a chain of tattoo parlors owned by Supercuts. Walk into an In-N-Out Burger at 1 am and everyone in there has "the look." It used to be the ugly misfit kids who went and fucked themselves up visually some more, now it's the Angelina Jolies and Drew Barrymores with the tattoos and the piercings, the greasy hair. What were badges of alienation and loneliness and poverty and depression are de rigueur cool hipsterism now. I know people who had their tattoos done in the 70s who've gotten them since removed, or let their pierced nostrils grow back in a backlash to the new cool. Sometimes you just wanna say, "Leave my subculture alone."

The Classical

It all started when I won a first press of DOA's *The Prisoner* 45 on eBay, (first press distinguished as a rubber stamped "D.O.A" in red on a black and white sleeve, versus the printed letters on the later pressings). Happily, I discovered that said seller lived in town. Too cheap to pay postage, I emailed the guy and asked how we might hook up. Long story short, seller was none other than one Dave Ferguson, famous/infamous owner of the CD Presents record label. Last time I'd met the guy was over ten years ago when my buddy Jim Brick and I had driven up from San Jose to his warehouse to buy copies of the AVENGERS LP jacket that had been intended for the GO label. CD Presents had gotten into some legal scuffle with GO and subsequently issued it with a different jacket altogether. But that's another story and another era. Currently, he is all about non-profit and his non-profit organization, IFUC (Institute For Unpopular Culture), has noble intentions: to fund the out-there artists of this beautiful city.

In fact, Dave pointed out, he had this happening that he thought I should check out. He had had this concept of symphonic interpretations of punk and new wave songs. He had already gathered a few kindred groupings (in the "quartet" and "quintet" variety that you find in the hoity toity world of classical) who were working up their repertoires, and the happening, held at the Facility 3 art space in Potrero Hill, was where they'd make their debut.

After some tête à tête with cool artists (Margot Knight proved herself particularly interesting, with a set of tripped out surrealistic photographs) and minds blown by Kerry Laitala's experimental films, the strains of strings bowed and tuned creaked their way into the aural landscape, which up to then consisted of the the VILETONES being blared out of the monitors. A double taking moment to be sure.

While somewhat spottily rehearsed (which matched the punk ethos anyway), the first group, a string quartet named Q80, lurched into X's "We're Desperate." Lacking the staccato drum spasms of DJ Bonebrake, the arrangement was smoothed over as far as punk goes, but the shared Exene/Doe vocals were

played out via the two violinists to satisfying effect. Next they tackled ENGLISH BEAT's "Rotating Heads," which translated pretty well, as surprisingly so did their MINOR THREAT's "It Follows," which took on a totally different vibe. The ferocious singleminded simplicity of the original was transformed into a complex multi-voiced think piece. My brain cells organized themselves into hydrogen atoms. They finished their brief set with THE PIXIES' "Dead," largely a failed experiment, and the B-52's "52 Girls."

John Gluck's arrangement of DEVO's "Uncontrollable Urge" was next up, performed by a half-dozen-membered wind ensemble. What made the original great, with Mothersbaugh's spastic and organic vocals ("Yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah yeah!") as a counterpoint to the mechanized and repetitive backing instrumentation, was turned upside down. Gluck had the vocals sweetly played out by a lone piccolo, like an little bird flitting about in a meadow scene. Shocking.

Finally, the over the top antics of one Aaron Seeman stole the rest of the show. After a somewhat tepid arrangement of TELEVISION's "See No Evil," an unnamed string quartet was joined by Seeman, who also goes by the nom de plume "Duck Man Do" to do his arrangement of the DEAD KENNEDYS signature piece "California Uber Alles." While the instrumentation provided easy listening, Duck did a vocal performance that was a warble-for-warble spot-on Jello. As if that wasn't enough, he followed that with a solo accordion set, playing a bunch more DK tunes ("Kill The Poor," "Forward To Death," a totally killer version of "Drug Me") interspersed with bad 70s drivel (anyone remember Dan Hill's "Sometimes When We Touch"?) Perhaps we'll see him next fronting a reformed DK's on their reunion tour and quest for renewed record sales. Thoroughly engaging stuff.

Ferguson hopes to coalesce these combos and eventually build a full fledged orchestra who will play all this sort of stuff. Bleed for me!

The In Box

BAND OF FELONS (www.angelfire.com/punk3/ bandoffelons) thug their way thru five songs on the *Drown My Sorrows* EP on their own Go For Broke Records. Good obnoxious shit with a hardcore tinge, chockfulla the requisite "Hey's" and "Whoa's" as all proper beer swillin' Mutha punks like to shout between swigs. Insanely dumbo lyrics ("Late at night, I won't make a peep. I'll smash your fucking heads in your sleep") that worse yet are included in the liner notes...why not just include more pictures of this very handsome band instead? The back cover art slyly apes that of the first MOBY GRAPE LP, with bass player Eddie Shots subtly flashing his fuck youse finger (with beer in hand). Fuckin' hilarious—these guys gotta good sense of humor. Musically, this stuff kicks a buttock. Guitars blaze on "No Place Like Home." Powerful vocals on "Time For a Change." Hardcore ranting on "Dick and Jane." The lead track "One Foot Over The Edge" is so singalong and drinkalong that you might just find yourself under the bar in a pool of vomit and smiles and unicorns and rainbows. Get it!

Legitly, the Harbinger Sound record label releases the *Stamp Out Normality!* LP from the ever-so-coolly named PSEUDO EXISTORS. 1979 was their circa, UK their homeland. Two 7" EPs they first put out on the mighty Dead Good Records, a Lincoln-based label that also put out records by the CIGARETTES and X-S ENERGY. Found on this comp are the tracks from these along with a buncha live tracks. This is the most handsomely packaged LP since JOHNNY AND THE DICKS. Thick stocked insert with beeyootiful vintage photos collaged with old rec reviews. A glossy poster repro of the record release of the *Stamp Out Normality!* 7" EP. PLUS, a way hep PSEUDO EXISTORS 1" button (badge to you limeys). Well worth buying.

I was first introduced to the WIPERS in '83, on the release of their third LP *Over The Edge.* The raw doom rock stuck with me ever since, and over the years I diligently chased down the rest of their 7" and LP releases, up through lead WIPER Greg Sage's solo LP *Straight Ahead.* I saw their awesome live presence only once, as the opening band to the farewell tour of BIG BLACK in 1987. Zeno Records, which might be Greg's label, started up a year ago or so, now Phoenix-based, and has recently released a WIPERS box set. It combines their first three studio LPs along with extra tracks over three CDs. A cool booklet with Sage's liner notes describes their progression in style and recording technique (Sage recorded and engineered the LPs himself). Sage's pre-punk musical experience and older age lent to the WIPERS originality as a punk band. His first recording was as guitarist on the BEAUREGARDE LP, a wrestling record that came out in 1969, when Sage was 17. By the time punk hit their native Oregon, Sage was already in his late 20s. His maturity shined through intelligent lyrics, and minor chord stylings of the music echoed the gloomy weather of Portland. Like Black Flag's anti-HC direction with their *My War* LP, the WIPERS refused to adhere to any punk idiom, and their second LP *Youth of America* stretched the title track to 14 minutes. A mere $20 PP for the 3 disc set thru the Zeno Records website. What a bargoon!

Scum

Who the hell has any time to handwrite anymore? Sasa Milutinovic from Sarajevo, Bosnia not only sends me a color xerox photo of the burned out building that used to be his flat, but a meticulously handwritten letter pleading for my lazy ass to send him a tape of the most obscure US punk bands. Not a fat chance. Napping and petting my horsey are more important. If anyone wants to help the guy out, email me and I'll pass on his address.

Amoeba Records in LA scored a big punk collection recently. Skimmed off the top? An OPUS and HELEN KILLER, fr'inst. Word has it that the pick of the litter will be available sometime in October, so pack your elbow pads. Looks like prices are drooping a bit as a number of reserves were not met on eBay recently. Items such as desirable as Oz punks THE NEWS - Dirty Lies, and high school lo-fi Texans DOT VAETH failed to meet min.

2002 Year End Poll

Most Ethnically Insulting Hairdo - Roger "Rice Bowl # 4" Mah
Least Likely To Find the BUZZARIANS Picture Sleeve - Jason "Chowder" Litchfield
Most Insulting Trade Proposal - the CHEIFS for THE EXIT (US) straight up. (both parties anonymous)
Best CD - SCREAMING URGE on the Homework Series.
Doughiest Collector - Ryan "Toast" Richardson (second year in a row.)
Easiest Bids To Snipe - Rob "Lewdsnot" Noxious
Best Reunion Gig - MISSION OF BURMA
Lamest Hoarder of Pseudo-collectibles - Ray "You Owe Me A Diet Coke" L.
Worst eBay Name - Zoloft_Anaconda
Hottest New Wave Chicks - Tiff and Deb, weekly at the "1984" Dance Night, Cat Club on Folsom St.

Send your valuables to Henry, 4309 23rd St, San Francisco, CA 94114. Anything worth less than $20 gets slagged, but all submissions get mentioned. Send virtual graft to terasearch@yahoo.com.

The US's latest warmonger desire, this time targeting Iraq, really doesn't surprise me. And the US's higher-ups apparent bully-type egotism pushing for a unilateral assault, practically nay saying any

multilateral UN resolution, really doesn't surprise me. And I'm sad to say that. Their imperialist big boy intimidation, threats, and muscle flexes really disgust and offend me.

How long have the sanctions against Iraq, themselves a lethal weapon, been in place? Twelve years now? Already twelve years of an insidious form of warfare. Infrastructural terrorism against the Iraqi people, the Iraqi children whose death toll rings in at as many as 576,000 as a result of the first five years of the sanctions because the sanctions do not allow medical necessities, that the US thinks could possibly be able to be used for weapons, in to Iraq.

According to UNICEF, children who have been poisoned by contaminated water die from dysentery, cholera, and diarrhea. Others have gotten respiratory infections that become fatal full body infections. Their hospitals are empty of anesthetics and antibiotics. Another UNICEF survey found that almost a third of Iraqi children are suffering from chronic malnutrition. Several sources have consistently reported that an estimated 4,500-5,000 children die each month for lack of adequate food or medicine.

Meanwhile, crazy-assed Saddam and his cronies remain untouched from similar effects of the same sanctions. But the US continues to perpetuate the myth that sanctions are an effective, nonviolent way to pressure the Iraqi government. Nonviolent, my ass. And yeah, they've been so effective that now the US wants to bomb the shit out of them.

Chomsky was recently asked, "What are the likely humanitarian consequences of a US war?" His response was that he didn't know and that nobody knows, including me. I'm only left asking myself, "What would I do as an Iraqi mom?" And again, I don't know. But I do know that something as dastardly as killing more innocent people, among them moms and children, isn't any good. Not to oversimplify the magnitude of the situation, but things that aren't good for moms and kids just aren't good for anyone. Moms and bombs, kids and killing is just boring and stupid and it's disgusting that it's been going on for ages. It's the same old shit and people here in the US are embracing it, biting the propaganda hook. Don't bite the hook!

And while the masses are biting the hook, isn't it convenient that we're getting fucked too? Our attention is diverted from health care, social security, education, and development of our own weapons of mass destruction.

The US government is a severe parent who is trying to frighten its children. They withhold information from us as a way to maintain authority, just like when parents withhold information from their kids about things like sex by saying, "You shouldn't do it because I said so." They tell us that Saddam is crazy as hell (and I do think he is) and that he needs to be stopped at all costs, but they don't fully explain their intents to be dipping their paws into Iraq's control of the second largest oil reserve in the world.

So we, the US government's children, are unaware of the scary truths and are scared of the next media-hyped boogie man, instead.

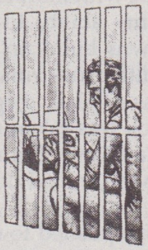
In addition to easing my daughter's natural fears of her own boogie men, I wonder how in the hell I'll be able to explain to her how to play fair when all around her, she'll see the US government's bully tactics of not playing fair. For example, they want to do weapons inspections in Iraq, or at least that's what they claim, but who gets to inspect the US's weapons? The whole concept of inspecting for weapons of mass destruction is lopsided and unfair. We don't look at Israel, who probably does have some, but Iraq needs to comply, or else. And didn't we sell weapons of mass destruction to both Iran and Iraq so they could obliterate each other in the 1980s?

Before becoming a mother, it pissed me off that the US was such an asshole in the world, the bully on the playground. But I thought about it in abstract ways. Now that I have a two-and-a-half year-old daughter, the bullying feels more real to me and it's difficult to explain. That's because when I hear about all the pain and suffering and terror that the US delivers to other mother's children's lives, I take it personally and I get sad. But it's also because Emma-Joy is growing up in this world and all the time and resources spent on perpetuating violence and waging war means less spent on education and health care, things that all people need.

I'm scared of the real boogie man and his real boogie boys, the resident in the White House and his moles that live with him on the Hill. Now who's gonna pacify me? Who's gonna promise me that when Emma-Joy's a teenager there won't be regular terrorist attacks here as a consequence of this game of war, this charade of cowboys and Indians, this ad campaign for weapon manufacturers?

Punkparents, get in touch.

PO Box 12839, Gainesville, FL 32604, yardwideyarns@hotmail.com



1,800,000 and counting

A column by Prisoners.

Multiple Tasking with a One Track Mind

Punk rock has a tendency of becoming one of three things to an individual that gets involved in the appreciation of the sounds and ideals of all things punk. One, a passing phase, for some as short as a summer (or one Warped Tour) and for others several years, until either maximum jadism (a term sounding like an In/Humanity EP) burns 'em out, their favorite scene darlings sign to a major or they finally get out of college and assimilate into corporate collars. Two, a lasting lifestyle because the individual is content with being drunk, or vocally subversive, or is too weird to get anywhere else and be tolerated...or maybe they get married, work wage labor, have kids and still wear Detestation shirts and write columns for big zines. Three, punk rock actually saves their fucking life and becomes the secret coping with reality in an impaired existence.

I'm in the third fuckin category, and I'm not into up service or empty cliche chatterboxing. Sometimes I have no idea what my life, mental health, and emotional state in this fuckin' individual-suffocating prison "life" would be without small, but hard earned and revered music cache I have sitting next to my never lonely inanimate love partner (the most adored plastic boombox on this globe) on the scratched steel metal desk welded to plate reinforcing my back cell wall of concrete.

I've always been a guy that needed stimulation and lacked the ability to just be entertained by my freaky-creepy thought waves. Being a drug addict for so long, and just living full throttle, on the edge, gun to the cranium, needle in the arm, dick in a disease, cops on the heels, pockets full of theft, pedal to the stolen floorboard, run the body into the ground, land in a cell kinda life, I'm prone to be an idiot a lot of the time. Make dumb decisions very easily, get enraged at hopeless situations and constant bad luck strokes, desire excitement and get really bored without it. And boredom ends up becoming disastrous, because boredom makes me feel worthless, which gets me depressed, which lets me obsess on this tiny fuckin cell in which I am confined, which makes me sad (or frustratingly mad). And the first thought that pops into my head, still...is drugs. After being undominated by hard drugs and abusing substance as a way to cope with my life and my own inner sickness, I still think how much doing some heroin would get me out of the shitty-feelin into pacified fuzzy contentment. Or a shot of speed would give me a reason to be edgy. So...this boy I am has to come up with creative ways to compulsively and obsessively habitually abuse something (that's not harmful to me) to keep me focused, pro-

ductive, occupied, and away from falling back into a fuck-it-all-just-got-loaded mind frame. Although masturbation sessions at least seem to fill the instant gratification void, it's just not fuckin conceivable to just whip it out and give it a good scrub when my cell pony, the gutterdeath boy from Slayer-ville is trying to watch *King of the Hill* in our 8'x12'. So what can I do when I'm feelin' extra confined or boredom seems imminent and looming?

I can roach over to my ever-eager headphones dying to be plugged in and attended to, then pull out a stack of zines or *MRRs* on my locker shelf, which always seem to be snottily saying..."Be a poser or read us now weak boy! You elitist bastard, you only read the Italy scene report, what about New Jersey?" Truly, I get not only gratification instantly, but I get true fulfillment and productive amounts of reflection dealing with the very things I'm going through, and positive reinforcement, and even validation for my anger—submerging in the noises, voices and inky letter configurations...I feel secure and fuckin' capable.

The place I habitate with morbid reluctance would be insidiously unbearable if my ability to ground-out to blast-beats, shoutalongs, breakdowns build on moshin-ass, strange signature time structures, filthy rock riffs, dual vocals, street worthy workin-class snottiness or plain disgust capture in three fuckin chords and fast tempos was taken away or negated. I'd break down like Drew in Mad Love, I'm not lying. OK, maybe more like crazy razor guy in the wall...I'd be a lot bigger of an asshole than I am now.

The other day I was pushed to my feeble limits by this disrespectful and vindictive asshole that was getting off on causing problems for my fag-ass on the yard, and the old violent undertones of my past life as "lash-out-at-those-who-push-you" personality were surfacing as I lay on my bunk in this 100+ degree summer's end cell heat box. Stewing on the fucked up people I'm forced to try to coherently live with in a constantly stressful and hectic ("Too hectic! Too hectic!") environment of scandalous actions and vicious rumors. I was playing this attractive scenario out in my mind, where I creep up behind him out in the yard while he's busy bullshitting and being his pridefully elusive self and bash his face into the ground until the pigs drench me with pepper spray and beat me with batons and I go down in hazy resolve.

Then I rein in my bitterness, shove in my favorite CD and let Devon Blearrrrgh out exactly what I'm feeling... "For every step forward there are three steps back/For every major victory there are several small defeats/Come watch the carnival/Observe the freakshow/ As a simple man tries to carry more than just his load..." I don't know how many times the combination of the driving overwhelming sound and energy of WxHxN? and the honesty and insight of Devon's lyrics have laid bare my turmoil and promised me my personal life struggle isn't futile and made me feel a lot better, feel understood and somehow not alone in my task of fighting today's melee, to survive until I can arise to a new sun and new set of trials. My war, my life, my way...It's *our* way.

I have a few healthy and meaningful friendships here, people I would miss if I was suddenly snatched up to be relocated and housed elsewhere, and I have two increasingly great and impossible to believe lovers that give me constant support through phone calls, thoughtfulness and letters (not to mention the horde of international pen pals and close conspiratorial subverts I call family...), but who are so far away and only really penetrate my daily life on my insides. Where the magic is with all of these along with a usually positive outlook, I'm able to deter myself from bringing unnecessarily belligerent and acting out. It's not about being a fuckin square, or being a "program success." It's not about following rules or conformed to guidelines. It's about being happy and healthy and staying sane and getting through this prison sentence one day at a time. And when I want to fight, or do drugs, or just give into rage and frustration until I combust., it's my music that is right here. That reminds me of *all I have*. Out there, everywhere, right now in life. The music that I can reach out and touch in real time... You don't know what it's like, or maybe you do. Have you ever been in a place of grief and agitation, aching physically, missing someone so much it hurts, unable to do anything, to get away from where you are to where they are? Sometimes my short attention span gets all blunt and the eating-up feeling hardens my fists, releasing them on another would feel so...bitterly good. The aggression leaking out of me through bruising knuckles...like a Broken Bones' song come to life....but...

I go to the hole, I lose a huge chunk of the best shit I got in this cell: I lose my ability to hear songs I grow from, I lose my weekend phone calls to my boyfriend Richard and my mom, my visits with Janice Flux and my lovers, the visiting room where I forget the cell blocks for a few hours in the presence of someone who's free, but got enough pirate in them to bring it to me to share for awhile. I'd hate myself for it, and for hurting another out of selfishness. I'd probably get beat down anyway, 'cause I'm really not a Victory style boy, I'm like a Jade Tree kid hooked on Heresy. I'd get all damaged by own its-all-fucked-up-now-so-fuck-shit-up-more-like-Blatz-told-me-to and dig a hole for myself that will fuck up what little slice of good I have in confinement. Without my music, my small potent one-man-prison-punk-rock scene, I'd be worse for the wear. My life here is tolerable and better and a lot more positive because of punk rock and its impact on my daily life, moments and situations. And that's the fuckin truth. Punk rock saves me every day and *that ain't a cliche*.

To all locked down punx, queers, revolutionaries: stay strong and believe in self. To all free punx, queers, revolutionaries..fight daily but remain free. To all who love someone...respect that life gift. Give back....

Please write me.

Neil Wiener/*Wiener Society* Zine, Neil Edgar, K61832, A3-221, PO Box 409000, Ione, CA 95640, USA.

Thanks to MRR, Mike Thorn, and Arwen for edit skills, Rib, Spooky, and Janice Flux...Let's fuckin go!

Dear Congressman Patrick,

It has recently come to my attention that your organization, this "Congress" I've been hearing about, has given some pretty wide clearance to George W. Bush concerning his planned invasion of Iraq. We here at the Providence Public Library have been meeting every day at lunch in the break room to discuss the impending war. We've decided to not support the invasion, and have a hard time believing you let this happen.

I was living in Florida during the election fiasco; yes, it was unbelievable. No, it didn't seem real. I totally had the world up my ass, dude. I remember going on a long walk with a friend talking about historical bad timing, how he was planning on finally putting his book out, but we just happened to find ourselves at this unfortunate impasse in which the world will have no choice but to ignore his contribution due to the sudden sweep of wartime. It was a strange observation at that point, if only because I felt war was such an unreal possibility. I mean, who is the United States going to fight? At that point, I didn't feel like anything was *really* happening. I had no faith in the electoral process in the first place, so the big hooha going on in my state was just another illustration of how fucked things were. I thought that even if all the recounts and indignation and outrage landed Bush in office still, then people would just kind of ignore him, let him serve his four years, get it out of his sys-

tem, and then resume a semblance of sane representative democracy, like we kind of usually have.

Fuck, man; that's just not how it's happening. Instead we have the president that no one elected leading us into the war that no one supports. Bush has flouted the UN nine times since his term began, and not like leaving the toilet lid up, but like rejecting accountability to a world court! Like walking out of the summit on racism! And now he wants *who* to back him as he draws up plans to storm the Casbah?

As a matter of fact, we have a petition with 297 signatures collected throughout the library system stating that on the day that the military begins bombing Iraq, we will close the library as a protest. We are prepared to continue this course of action as long as we deem germane.

But make no mistake, no one's asking for permission. The United States has been marinating in number one victim status for over a year now, and goddammit, we're gonna get *something* out of it. We're first going to go in with air strikes. We are going to bomb their funny little houses and their smelly food into whatever came before the stone age in which they currently reside. This part of the program will be televised tastefully in a discreet timeslot. It will, of course, fucking rule.

The second helping will consist of the tanks and guns, which will not only be untelevised, but following protocol from the first time we did this, all still photographs will have to pass the Dept. of Defense press envoy. There will be no little girls running naked through the streets on fire this time, that is a guarantee.

Once we have closed the library—I forgot to mention we would be in the buildings. Seven of them. Once we do that, we will begin combing the library's collection of books for references to you or any member of you extended family, and ripping those pages out. Actually, many of us have already cataloged a list of references to you currently in our catalog. We haven't ripped any of them out yet, though.

As of the day I write this, October 2nd, there has been an agreement made which states that Bush won't actually have to report to Congress concerning actions against Iraq for two weeks after he actually does anything. Brilliant. Yesterday, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer just came out and said that assassinating Saddam* would cost considerably less than the estimated $9 billion *a month* the war could run; however, it seems that the US has been trying that since the 80s through its involvement with the Kurdistan Democratic Party, an insurgent group in Northern Iraq, and it just isn't really panning out. By the time this issue of *MRR* hits the stands, it's quite possible that the first of our courageous boys will be settling into freshly dug holes, freed of the considerable weight that the strafing of towns may bring to one's conscience.

We will promptly establish the Rhode Island Congress hotline to our library. You can call us there any time to either tell us that you stopped the invasion or quit your job in protest. Only then will we reopen the library.

When the papers report plans of bombing Baghdad, it registers as some Technicolor fantasy with airplanes grazing Byzantine** domes, camels running for cover, and street vendors cursing their rotten luck in some crazy outer space language. But Baghdad is a city of 3.2 million people. Bombing it would be *really ugly*. When bombs drop onto buildings there, they will fall in on the people inside of them, breaking bones, piercing flesh, and generally inflicting the kind of pressure on a body that makes real blood come out of it.

In close, Congressman Patrick, we want you to know that despite our decision and stance against the pending war, we trust you will make the right decision. Your record speaks highly of your stature as an honest, upright figure in Rhode Island's public life, and although we look forward to taking the time off, we will keep the library open as long as the US stays out of Iraq.

Sincerely,
Mike Taylor,
Analog Resource Coordinator,
Providence Public Library

To sum up: not to be patronizing; I know you know Iraq is not a cartoon. I'm even pretty confident that almost all readers of this magazine are against the invasion. I'm even going to assume that you want to resist, but have considerable misgivings about how to effectively voice a challenge when the administration has demonstrated that they really don't care what anyone thinks. In the end, just like the first time, this is an oil war cloaked in the language of "regime change" and "flagrant disregard for the UN Security Council" (ironic,yes). The US is using waning momentum from its time in the spotlight as victim sweetheart to dryfuck its way into Iraqi oil fields. Again. The song is so repetitive I'm embarrassed to sing it. So I'll stop. I have to go write my congressman or some shit.

* Although apparently some dipshit thought to make that illegal with EO 12333, an executive order penned under Reagan outlawing attempts to assassinate foreign leaders. Isn't that, like, *totally fucking weird?*

** Yes, I know that architecture isn't *really Byzantine*, but I think the word paints the picture I need for effect, smarty.

Anniversary Rant

Yee ha. This column marks my thirteenth. By my calculations that means that it's my anniversary. That's tons of fucking words. I can hardly believe that I didn't use any of those words to rant about how calling *Punk Planet* Punk Planet is a gross misnomer threatening to further erode what the word "punk" means. Fuckin' a, man! If boring indie pop is punk, then what's punk? What isn't punk? Fuck that. How would they like it if I started a magazine called *Boring Indie Pop Planet* and wrote about punk? You don't see us co-opting their words. And don't even get me started on MTV's new M2 channel. A whole channel devoted to marketing pop music designed to appeal to people that scoff at pop music. What kind of bullshit is that?

Fuck. You see how easily this column can spin out of control? I'm teetering on the edge this kind of paranoid ranting shit every month. Somehow I'm usually able to fend it off, but fuckin' a. I've been here a year! I should cut myself some slack!

More Anniversary Stuff

I started my first column off by saying that I was 25 years old. I'm 26 now. I said I lived in my sister's old bedroom at my parents' house. Now, I live in my cousin's old bedroom at my uncle's house. I also said I "suffer from and do battle with" anxiety, depression, and agoraphobia. I guess that's still true, although lately the "do battle with" part sounds like a kind of hollow claim. I've been doing more hiding than battling lately. But whatever man. I'm still plugging away, and I'm still holding out hope for the future. I'm back in weekly therapy and trying out some new medication combinations.

When I first started doing this column, I asked for people suffering from Mental Illness to get in touch. People did. There are tons of us out there with this shit. I know it kind of helps to know that there are other people out there like you. It sort of fends off some of the shame, alienation, and feelings of worthlessness that go along with Mental Illness. From what I hear, this column is letting people know that we are out here, so that's good. Anyway, I guess I'll open it up again. What should I be talking about in this column? What mental illness shit needs to be addressed? Fuckin' send some shit in!

Eulogy For a Dead Friend.

Fuckin' a. My pal Tom is dead. I'm really not sure what to

make of it. I haven't cried yet. But maybe that's because of the Celexa. I've only cried once since I've been on the stuff. I'm not sure how the fuck to react. Maybe I'll never cry for him. I don't know.

In the years I've been into punk I've seen a bunch of people react to loosing friends. There's the "Rest In Peace" on the back of the record, the section of a zine eulogy, and the tribute show. They've always struck me as gestures that fall a little short. I mean, come on, a fucking guy is fucking dead, and we're running around pasting his picture into some crumby zine. What the fuck? That doesn't do shit.

But now my pal Tom is dead. And there *isn't* shit I can do. I guess the truth is you *can't* do shit. I'm faintly trying to fight off the impulse to eulogize him in my column, but totally failing. It's a weak gesture, but how can you not? I'm not going to fucking write my column about the war on Iraq or whatever; my fucking pal Tom is in a goddamn box in the ground. Fuck.

So, Tom was a dude I liked a lot. I missed his wake and I missed his funeral. I didn't even know the fucker was dead until after they put him in the ground. So, I'm going to tell you guys about him. I guess, partly because I need to do *something* about it, and partly because he was totally mint dude. Well, a pretty mint dude at the least. And fuck it he did bug me a few times about putting him in my column.

Tom was a big fat guy with long black hair and a beard. He was into true metal, wrestling, and I think baseball cards and comic books too. He was a few years older than me. He owned the record store where I used to work. He only carried punk, hardcore, and metal. For the corporate alternative crap, he had a section called "Bands That Sound like KORN." He was the only Fran Drescher fan I have ever known. He was bummed when he missed her book signing. *Cancer Schmancer*. He never missed *The Nanny Double Wammy*, where the TV would play two episodes of *The Nanny* back to back.

Tom gave me a job at his record store and always took Traffic Violation releases, and even paid me up front for them sometimes. The dude got me into *7th Heaven*. Not the expression to describe bliss, but the WB's weird hour-long Christian family soap-opera comedy. Tom introduced me to the power metal band HAMMERFALL. Tom fired me from the record store for having too good of a job during the week. Tom told me which MANOWAR record to buy first. I'm pretty sure *Sign Of The Hammer* was his favorite. But he wanted me to start off with *Fighting the World*. Tom never got bummed when I'd come into the store only to take a shit. Tom's bathroom was filthy.

I always kind of looked up to Tom in a weird way. I mean he was a seriously sedentary dude, but it seemed like being friends with him was fun. So, I gave it a shot. After working for him, I made it a point to stop in the record store a few times a week to shoot shit with the man. Slowly, especially over the past year or so, we became friends. We put in some serious hours together. For a stretch I was eating dinner at the record store one night a week. I got to know him. I met his dad. I met his wife.

He always trusted me with money and shit. He never kept a single scrap of paper keeping track of how much Traffic Violation stuff I'd dropped off. Every few months, I'd just tell him how much he owed me, and I'd restock my shit. I mean, I'm not kidding my self; the real reason for that was because Tom was fucking brutally lazy. But still, he did trust me.

I mentioned Tom once before in my column. He's a dude that I felt like I could count on in the event of me totally fucking losing my shit with panic. The record store is about halfway between my house and where I work. On days where getting home from work was brutal with the anxiety, it always helped to know that I could call Tom up and he was pretty close, and could come get me. A lot of times, I'd just stop in the store for a breather. He was a good fucking guy.

I know it's cliché, but I feel like Tom is still at the record store. Like he's just sitting there and I can go in and he'll tell me the story about the time he died. You know? I know he died, but fuck, he's still going to be at the record store right? I wonder what it was like when he died. If he saw a bright light, I bet he was too lazy to walk towards it. That's probably what his story would be. He'd tell me about how he was going to walk toward the light but just sat for a little while instead. Fucking Tom.

Fuck man. Look at this thing. A eulogy. How are you supposed to make sense of your pal dying? Motherfucker.

War

OK, maybe I am going to write my column on the war in Iraq. Well, not all of it, but it is a theme issue, and I have some shit to say. Besides, columnists were "strongly encouraged." And while this isn't really my bag, I've had a couple of things on my mind about it lately.

First is the war on Saddam. Since when do nations go to war with a person? And besides that, if the US is going to war with a person, can't we at least call him by his full name? Or his last name at the very least. Jeez. It seems like a pretty cheap public relations move. Hey everybody, we're not going to war with a country where people are going to get maimed and killed. We're just going to war with one really bad dude.

In response to questions about the actual threat posed by Iraq, I saw Bush quoted as saying, "After all, this is the guy who tried to kill my dad." What the fuck does that mean? What is this numbnuts even talking about? How does this guy get away with this shit? That sounds like some playground fight shit. He basically answered the question with, "I am going to war because of a paranoid family vendetta." Weird.

Anyway, like I said, international politics really aren't my bag. However, I do know a little about how punk works. So for my second trick, I'm going to drop some knowledge on that.

For a lot of people punk is the basis for their resistance and activism against bullshit war and corporate domination. That's why it's important to keep our network of bands, labels, distribution, and zines separate and self-sufficient. If punk is going to be a force in criticizing the establishment, we can't be a part of it too. Anti-war songs don't mean as much when the record label putting the shit out is owned by a company that manufactures the guns and bombs used in the war.

While it might not be this direct, something along these lines happened here in the states a few years back. CONFLICT reissued a lot of their back catalog with the New York label, Go Kart Records. Included in the reissues was the classic *Only Stupid Bastards Help EMI*. Go Kart's primary distributor is Caroline Distribution, which is owned by EMI. The reason CONFLICT was so bummed on EMI to begin with is because their parent company, Thorns-EMI, is a major arms manufacturer. So now, to some degree, you've got the powers that be controlling the bullshit *and* the resistance to the bullshit. So, CONFLICT becomes the stupid bastards helping EMI.

CONFLICT and Go Kart have since parted ways, but really, that whole thing was weird. At one point, I saw promotional pens at the record store that had the Go Kart logo on them that said "Only Stupid Bastards Help Go Kart."

So, when shit heats up like this internationally, it really accents the point that punk needs to stay separate and self-sufficient. We need to be vigilant about this stuff. Because when shit goes down, it's us and them. And if we are going to have a strong anti-war movement, our art, methods of communication, and infrastructure need to be as disentangled form the international war machine as possible. Thorns-EMI getting a piece of the CONFLICT back catalog isn't disentangled. It's weird and fucked up.

I don't know man. The whole things fucked up. I think that does it for me this month. Thanks all!

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The Punk Rocker Mental Illness Pen Pal Network is up and running. If you are looking to connect with someone to write back and forth with about Mental Illness, send over your info,

and I'll hook it up. My contact information is below.

***

Past "Oh Man What The Fuck!?!??!" columns are available on the web at www.trafficviolation.com.

Positivity isn't in my dictionary but negativity is: Wells Tipley, PO Box 772, East Setauket, NY, 11733 USA. Or email me at wells@trafficviolation.com.

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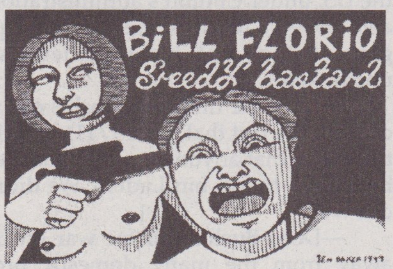
END NOTES:

1. In the first year of doing this column I wrote 21,017 words. I used the f-word 230 times. That's around 1.1%. My longest column was last month's. It clocked in with 2736 words and 38 f-words. In July I wrote 1649 words but only said the f-word five times. It totally fucked up my average.
2. For the "War" section I did most of my research on the Internet, as well as spoke to a few people who are more knowledgeable than me about stuff. If anyone would like more information on where I got my facts, please get in touch.
3. Fuckin', eh?



Before I get started with the continuing story of how I always get busted making fun of people I don't know, I just want to add to the list of people you should be prejudiced about. In case you haven't been keeping track, you should steer clear of people with mustaches and women who wear hats. I'm always very wary of people who are really into music, but it's like horrible top 40 type music. I can accept that—it's like a fat guy who really likes to eat, but he only goes to Dunkin Donuts and Wendy's—he'll talk about how the Frosty in Elmhurst is better than the Café Coolata in Jackson Heights like he writes the food column in *The New York Times,* but really he's just a fat slob with not enough cable TV channels—there's no reason to hate him, just pity him. I'll make an exception when it comes to Lenny Kravitz. If I just meet you and you bring up Lenny Kravitz, you may as well ask me to join the Klan or ask me to go down on your dog. *People who listen to Lenny Kravitz deserve to get beaten up by people who listen to Dave Matthews.*

OK, next topic. My friend, The Gamp, asked me for advice in this situation that came up. His band, Gigmantis, was offered a show an hour away from where he lives. The headliner is some guy's name, who was in Sebadoh. Who the hell cares? Nobody ever listened to Sebadoh—who the hell wants to see some guy? I mean, David Bowie has the decency to come up with a new band name every few years, what the fuck is wrong with the guy from Sebadoh? The second billing is some other guy's name that was in Dropkick Murphy's. I mean, its not like this is Joey Ramone—it doesn't have to say "from the Ramones" next to his name, or Iggy Pop—this is like Schmucky Stoolsample from Sebadoh and Barney McDoofus from Dropkick Murphy's. Who the hell is gonna show up at this show anyway? The next thing he tells me is there are five other bands that got added to the show. Being someone who believes a 20 minute set is almost wearing out your welcome, five bands leading up to two guys who got kicked out of their old bands for being pompous asses who just wanna be billed under their own name sounds like a wonderful waste of an evening. Then the best part! The Sebadoh guy wants 75% of the door and the Murphy guy wants most of the rest of it. Anyhow my advice was a little unorthodox but I think in this case it may work. I told him, "You should play the show and after you should slash the Sebadoh guy's tires. At least then he can justify taking 75% of the door and you can justify leaving without getting paid.

Speaking of rash decisions, they sent me an email to write about the upcoming war. Here what I have to say. About 300 of you buy *MRR* in the state of Florida. I bet you all didn't vote either cuz you're too dumb, too punk, or too jaded. This is *all your fault* and *MRR* is directly or indirectly responsible for you folks being fuck-ups. Therefore, *Maximum Rocknroll should claim responsibility for the war.* All these columnists can complain all they want about how Bush this and Cheney that, but it's all their fault.

OK, if you missed last month's column, I started recounting all the times I was busted for being a smartass jerk. I already recounted my wedding video outtakes and the drunken barber t-shirts, so here we go…

About four years ago, this ugly guy set up a portrait sitting at the Photography/Video Studio I work for. One of our Bar Mitzvah customers starting using us to make demo videos for her business—she sold emu farms. If you don't remember, in the mid 90s there was this scam going around where people bought emu farms for a hundred grand or so, because emu was gonna be the new red meat of the next century—it tastes like beef and is low in cholesterol and some shit like that. Anyhow, considering the last time any of us ate emu you can guess what happened. A whole bunch of people were stuck with a lot of angry flightless birds and they started taking out their frustrations by beating the emus to death for taking their life savings. So, for whatever reason this guy was the woman's partner and he needed a professional portrait of himself and for some reason he never picked the prints up. My boss called it a loss and left the prints of this scary man on my desk with little post-it notes on them saying stuff like, "I want to suck you off" and "Ride me like an Emu" The guy's pretty funny looking so I framed it and hung it on my wall near my front door in my apartment.

About a year later, I started working at home and needed my electrical box upgraded so I didn't fry all my computers. I called a few electricians in the area and they came over to check it out and give me an estimate. This semi-retired guy from the neighborhood walks in and says, "Hey! That's Joe Caputo! You know Joe Caputo?!" My cousin was sitting in the next room and his head hits the table as he tried to hold in his guffaws. I stood there in shock and somehow tried to play stupid, "Um, no… That's my uncle Fred." "What?? No! That's Joe Caputo! Nobody looks like that guy! I grew up with this guy; I gotta give him a call!"

Anyhow, I didn't hire the guy, just to avoid any further conversation of Joe and how he obtained his wig etcetera. When we started the Shemps, we made Joe our mascot. I put him on our shirts, our stickers, our 45 label, etc. So a few months later my friend Anthony is working at Tower Records in Yonkers. He's wear the Shemps t-shirt. Who walks in, some other guy: "Hey! That's Joe Caputo! Why is Joe Caputo on your t-shirt?" Unfortunately, I think this story is a "to be continued…"

OK, getting back to the wedding video—over the years I've traded the video for other funny videos. Last year I put a lot of this stuff on one DVD and gave copies to my friends. I was asked to write for this website called ruthlessreviews.com which is partly run by the great Erich Shulte. Erich emailed me asking how I got ads for my zine. I told him that I'd send all the record labels a copy of my wedding video with the ad rates and usually they would like the video and send me money for ads just because it made them think my zine was cool even though they never read it. (If they did, they'd realize that I trashed all the bands on their label). I suggested I could copy some DVDs for him and he could mail them to advertisers. A couple of weeks later I was ready to mail them and Erich told me to mail them to this guy Johnny in LA. Johnny was very happy to get em and thanked me. The next day I get an excited email.

OK, let's rewind—one of the videos I traded the wedding video for were films by this guy Huck Botko. Anyhow Huck

does films where he likes to bake cakes made with road kill, bum mucus, tainted blood, and porn star semen and feed them to his family at Christmas. In this one video, a friend of his is trying to make a documentary where he plans to give this girl he doesn't like a venereal disease. It turns out that this girl is Johnny's best friend, and while the girl is smart enough not to sleep with the lowlife guy, they do make it seem like they get revenge on her anyway. So after a few heated emails where Johnny starts getting angry because there is no way I can find out if the video is real or not, and I'm getting annoyed that Johnny doesn't just chuck the DVDs in the trash and forget about it I find myself sitting here typing this column.

Anyhow! Big news, the Shemps are recording a whole bunch of stuff and we're planning a West Coast tour January 10 through 20. If you wanna set us up a show that we're gonna need after the original show is cancelled let me know—if ya want a Joe Caputo t-shirt, show up.

When Bush shifted the focus of his recent "war on everything" to set its sights on Saddam Hussein, claiming that he represented a serious danger to the US, the whole world had virtually the same response—something akin to "What the fuck is he talking about?" The media instantly reported on this general feeling with stories and headlines about the lack of world (and, perhaps of greater importance in this case, US public) support. However, after a mind-numbingly short period of time, the question has changed from "Why would we attack Iraq?" to "Should we attack Iraq?" to "How and when are we going to attack Iraq?" I suspect that the bombs will be dropping soon after this issue hits the shelf.

How did we change gears so quickly? What happened? To answer these questions, it might be time to take yet another look at my friends and yours—the US media machine.

The mass media in the US has been a fascinating spectacle indeed since 9/11 (and please note that I said *fascinating*, not pleasant). As soon as the bombs began falling upon Afghanistan, CNN made it a policy to replay images from the WTC bombing every time they showed the damages and casualties caused by our attacks, claiming that "proper perspective" was needed in order to respect the feelings of victims' families. At the same time, there was much discussion amongst media outlets that they had the "responsibility" to avoid independent coverage of the bombings, choosing instead to rely solely upon "official" press releases. Bush has been very successful at portraying his "war on terror" to be a simple matter of good vs. evil, meaning that any in the media who attempted to report facts in an objective manner could easily be seen as "hurting the war effort" and, by extension, on the side of terror.

But when Bush set his sights on Iraq, the media originally reverted back to the pretense of objectivity. There were many stories about the lack of support for such a move and also plenty of editorials warning that an attack on Iraq could destabilize the entire region and put the US in a far more dangerous position than ever before. Unfortunately, this lasted for a little less than two weeks. In typical McCarthyist fashion, Bush continued to pound the "good vs. evil" bit into the ground, making it clear that anyone who spoke out against his administration's wishes was putting innocent Americans at risk. (It is interesting to point out that this tactic also worked well on Congress, not just the media.)

Therefore, in typical US media fashion, the majority of Americans have been misled into supporting a war against Iraq because our major news outlets have chosen to ignore some of the most pressing questions. Here are a few examples of the questions not being addressed:

—Is it pure coincidence that Bush, who comes from a family which built much of its wealth from oil, wants to go after Iraq, a country with the second largest supply of oil in the world? Is it coincidence that his father did the same thing a decade ago?

—Does the argument for ousting Saddam Hussein (who is, make no mistake, one serious bastard) fall in line with our general policy towards "evil" heads-of-state? Have we called for world support to oust other "evil" national leaders, such as Suharto, Milosevic, or Sharon? If not, then what makes this case different?

—Maybe the most important question of all, will this action make the world a safer place, for Americans or anyone else?

—Have we exhausted all possible recourses that could bring about a solution without resorting to war and violence? (Interesting side note: Donald Rumsfeld has been making the rounds on the media circuit of late, claiming that we have done everything possible to prevent war, but since Iraq kicked out the weapons inspectors in '98, nothing more can be done. In reality, the US, under Clinton's administration, pulled the inspectors out and lobbed a horde of missiles at Iraq only hours after they were gone, a fact that his interviewers have chosen to remain unchecked.)

—Does the timing of Bush's call for attack have anything to do with the fact that, post 9/11, Americans are scared and willing to believe that anyone is a legitimate enemy if told so? And what happened to Mr. bin Laden? We didn't even finish our last job, did we?

—Does Bush's call for war on Iraq serve to turn attention away from the many domestic problems he's not currently addressing, like numerous corporate scandals, a failing economy, the corrosion of a host of civil (and inherent) rights, and his administration's connections to "suspicious" accounting errors?

—What, if any, are our plans for a post-Saddam government for Iraq? Do we wish to allow a liberated Iraqi society to have open democratic elections, free from outside influence, or install a puppet government as we've done so often in the past elsewhere? Do we intend to actually help Iraq become a better place or merely destroy their infrastructure so that they are no longer a "threat" to us?

—How much will a military action cost the US and what aspects of government service will go un(der)funded to pay for it? Furthermore, does anyone stand to gain financially from a permanent wartime economy? If so, who?

While none of these questions are being fully addressed, if at all, the one you will *never* hear uttered is the last one. The mass media in our country is owned and operated, almost exclusively, by wealthy right wing conservatives, contrary to conservative's constant attempts at branding it "the liberal media." In a few cases, media companies are directly linked with corporations that stand to gain a lot of profit from any war effort. NBC, for example, is merely a tiny subsidiary of General Electric, a company that makes a good portion of its money by building things like airplane engines, nuclear reactors, and instrument panels for complicated machinery (i.e. military equipment). Also, CBS is connected with Westinghouse, one of the largest nuclear equipment companies in the world. In other cases which are much more difficult to piece together, high-ranking officials from media outlets have interests (mostly financial) in military companies and other industries that stand to gain from war.

These connections, while difficult to establish (unless, of course, you are a large media company with all of the resources available to find them) are of utmost importance and could lead to a great deal of insight about why vital questions regarding our president's latest war are not being asked or studied. Further research in this department will help show that this problem extends much further than just the media treatment of plans for an attack on Iraq—it plays a large part in *all* information we

receive. In any "free" society, the government *should* despise the media, for the media *should* be calling officials out on the things they're trying to cover up. However, here in the US, they're bosom buddies, and our society suffers daily because of it.

In Orwell's *1984*, the protagonist describes one particularly disturbing trend in the book's mind-controlled society. While mentioning that their "nation" is continually at war, he notes that the enemy they're fighting against often changes with the blink of an eye. Yesterday's allies become today's most dreaded foe with one brief public announcement. Instead of bothering to ask questions about why they should fight those who were their allies minutes earlier (which, in that fictional society, led to the appearance of kind officers that made sure you were never seen again), the public not only accepted these reversals, but served as fuel to Big Brother's fire— demanding vengeance for the crimes of the moments-old enemy.

Perhaps Orwell was a bit too optimistic about the development of our society's propaganda techniques. For here we are, nearly twenty years past 1984, and this process is still taking an unacceptably inefficient six months.

* * *

Write me and share some thoughts or send me a copy of your zine so I can see if we can get it on the shelf of our local, radical bookstore (a prime outlet for the decimation of information that contrasts our mass media's obvious bias, by the way) at: Rainbow Bookstore Co-op, c/o Nathan Berg, 426 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

War is the smell of burning bodies at sunset.

There are two roads that lead from Kuwait to Iraq now called the Highways of Death. One travels by the coast, and the other traverses inland. Ghosts still scream here, trying to escape the endless bombs and the napalm fire that lit up the sky on the night of February 25, 1991.

On the inland road, the sand holds the last breaths and bone splinters of thousands of people all fleeing for their lives. Hundreds of the dead were Palestinian and Kuwaiti refugees, trying to escape the coming siege of Kuwait City. They didn't know their lives would be cut down like weeds, in the openness of the desert. The offensive strategy was a simple, brutal, efficient, massacre. The US Air Force bombed the first and last cars in the long line of traffic headed north—trapping the entire convoy—then spent hours intensely bombing everything that moved. A US commander described the attack as a "turkey shoot." No distinction was made between buses carrying entire families, and tanks. Everything was blitzed.

You can almost feel the ground still shaking on the coastal road, as plane after plane unloaded its cluster bombs and incendiaries on a 60-mile-long-stretch of tanks, automobiles, armored cars, buses, trucks, and ambulances carrying tens of thousands of people, all retreating to Iraq as per the United Nations order. The use of force was so extreme that Joyce Chediac, who gave testimony to the International War Crimes Tribunal, stated, "Every vehicle was strafed or bombed, every windshield shattered, every tank burned, every truck riddled with shell fragments. The cabs of trucks were bombed so much that they were pushed into the ground, and it's impossible to see if they contain drivers or not. Windshields were melted away, and huge tanks were reduced to shrapnel." No survivors were found.

In the aftermath, the burned shells of about 2,000 vehicles stood stark and mangled on the highway. The *Los Angeles Times* reported, "All that was left was the scorched skeletons of vehicles and men alike, black and awful under the sun." There is a famous photo of a dead Iraqi soldier sitting upright, arms grasping the dashboard, skin and hair gone, charred black by intense heat, white teeth showing where his lips used to be. The image is so horrifying, I cannot look at it for long. It makes me feel sick to even picture it in my head. The man's exposed skull grimaces at me. His gaze is war, death, and hell on earth.

Several hours before the massacre began Saddam Hussein announced a complete troop withdrawal from Kuwait, in accordance with UN Resolution 660. The troops on the highway were returning to Iraq, beaten. The Gulf War and "Operation Desert Storm" were over. Hussein had announced the retreat over public and international radio. However, in defiance of international law, Bush ordered US troops to continue the offensive against Iraq's retreating ground forces. US pilots reported seeing white flags tied to the back of vehicles, as the "turkey shoot" continued. Presumably, racist capitalist Bush wanted to kill as many Arabs as he could, given the chance.

When asked about the total estimated 200,000 Iraqi military and civilians who died during the war, General Colin Powell replied, "It's really not a number I'm terribly interested in." General Powell and President Bush Sr. also didn't make a huge fuss about the hundreds of US soldiers who died during the Gulf War, or came back to their families with missing hands or feet, or sick from radiation poisoning from US uranium-tipped bombs, or suffering from the madness of war. Tens of thousands of US and allied soldiers have been diagnosed with Gulf War Syndrome: a collection of life threatening medical conditions linked to the various preventive medicines given experimentally to GIs, toxic smoke from the burning oilfields of Iraq and Kuwait, and various hazardous chemicals released during the war. The suffering is magnified tenfold in Iraq, as birth defects and cancer rates have increased exponentially.

War is Profit.

For the politicos, for the CEOs, for the bankers, the pollsters, and the newsmaker pundits, war is a political game, a seduction for loyalty and votes, a way to manufacture profit and control valuable natural resources. The goal of the Gulf War wasn't strategic military targets as we were led to believe on the news; the mission was to utterly destroy Iraq's industrial base, economy, government, and world standing, in order to control the oil. And in so doing, support US arms manufacturers.

It's the same today. Saddam is an excuse, and hardly a realistic threat to the world's most powerful military. House Representative Delahunt (D-MA) sums it up, "[Saddam is] a foe whose capacity and inclination to threaten the United States remain a matter of conjecture." It's smoke and mirrors.

In fact, the US has been eyeing Iraq as a target for decades. During the Cold War, in the 70s and 80s, Iraq was firmly in the Soviet camp. With Mother Russia at its side, we didn't dare an Iraqi invasion. However, with Russia a shadow of her former self, Bush Sr. decided to fight for the "national security interests of the United States," which includes controlling strategic natural resources around the world. Clinton bombed Iraq again in 1998 to distract the American public from Monica, and to once again terrorize the Iraqi population. Today, Bush Jr. is eager to bomb Iraq to encourage a failing, bloated economy crippled by corporate scandals. The former-cocaine-addict-President is also the son of Texas Oil, and likes his crude cheap.

Bombs fall.

For the common man and woman, war is, and has always been, death—the death of young army boys, many drafted against their will, and the many more women, children, men, elderly and others who cannot escape harm's way. The battlefield is strewn with the corpses of "non-combatants" who are not interested in the latest poll or the price of oil.

A bomb dropped from 30,000 feet has no politics. It doesn't vote or see what color your skin is. At that altitude, on a clear day, cars are the size of peas, and people, if seen at all, are moving specks of dirt.

During Desert Storm, the US bombed Iraq every day, for 42 days straight. Allied planes dropped an estimated 250,000 explosives. To try to get a handle on what kind of damage that carries, it's almost seven times the firepower of the atomic bomb that destroyed Hiroshima. Nothing was deemed sacred. Hospitals, water sanitation facilities, schools, neighborhoods, electric generators and crops were hit just as hard as military bunkers and bases.

Blood flows. And the US is preparing to attack, again.

Propaganda lies.

I remember Bush Sr.'s public relations campaign for Desert Storm. The motto was, "Support Our Troops." I was in high school, wearing out my first RAMONES tape. At night I'd bike around my small town and tear down the plastic yellow ribbons tied to fucking everything. How sad that many people here in the US "supported" our troops to die, to come home mutilated, and to kill so mercilessly. Like all good propaganda, the message was simple, and repeated often. It tapped into people's worst fears, that their sons and daughters, friends and lovers would die halfway across the world. Of course, supporting the war didn't help keep anyone alive. Sad, ridiculous, incredulous sheep wearing yellow.

The propaganda line repeated endlessly today is, "Hussein has weapons of mass destruction." Given the unmatched US arsenal of chemical, biological and nuclear weapons, this charge is rich. One associated example—the US repeatedly utilized the terrifying Fuel Air Explosive bomb during Desert Storm. The FAE bomb contains an ethylene oxide fuel, a highly flammable chemical, which forms an aerosol cloud on impact. The cloud is then detonated; creating a powerful blast that destroys anything within an area of about 50,000 square feet. People were incinerated, blown to bits, or died from the shock blast or lack of air. The famous dead man sitting in his truck may have seen the effects of this type of weapon of mass destruction.

The horror stories and human rights violations are endless. Since Desert Storm, an estimated two million Iraqi citizens have died as a result of sanctions and the lasting effects of the war. If we don't stop this newest threat of US military invasion (and the threats that will come after) more will die on all sides. I share the war stories of '91 as a reminder that war is not politics. War is death.

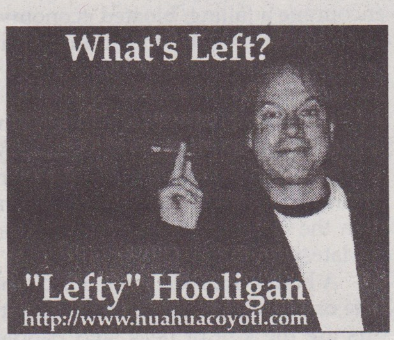
End this.

Think for yourself. Blind support for war is murder, and suicide. The web is full of information. Thanks to http://deoxy.org/wc/wc-death.htm for several figures used in this article.

Interesting that the first thing I wrote for MRR was a "What's the scoop?" in #180, May 1998. I asked punks at a SHOWCASE SHOWDOWN show in Fitchsburg, "What do you think about the US getting ready to bomb Iraq?" The question is eerily here again. What do you think?

Comments are encouraged at ransom@plaguedomes.com. Back columns and further rants and raves can be found at www.theprofits.org.

In solidarity, peace and justice—Erika.



So, it's Wednesday, August 7. In the evening sometime, around 7 I think. Maybe 8. I'm walking around south of Market in San Francisco, my new home, with my girlfriend Kay, getting familiar with the neighborhood.

We'd wandered around the Powell Street area and up to the newly redone, now almost completely concrete Union Square earlier. Even earlier, we'd eaten at a place a block from our apartment, a bar serving dinner called the Gin Joint. Now we were headed home, the sun setting in a dull rusty haze.

I'd noticed while walking around the large headlines in the *SF Chronicle's* PM edition; Cheney's speech that day, at the city's Commonwealth Club. I didn't think much of the fact that the *de facto* president and lead man in America's shadow government was in town, until we approached Folsom. A rotund Tweedledee cop stood behind his motorcycle blocking southbound traffic on 7th, while his Tweedledum partner did the same to northbound vehicles. A handful of curious people, about half grizzled street folk, stood at the corner, quietly waiting. A quick glance up and down Folsom's one way street revealed cops strung out along its length, stopping cross traffic from Division Street to the Bay Bridge.

"Cheney," I whispered to my girlfriend.

"What's this about?" Kay immediately asked the cop.

"Dignitary." The cop was brusque behind his motorcycle cop shades.

"Cheney?" She continued to probe.

He gave her a curt nod.

We crossed Folsom, and waited there with the small knot of onlookers. The mood was subdued. Nobody seemed too excited that Cheney was about to drive by. Except for the few of us standing around and waiting, the sidewalks were deserted. It was then I realized that, in a few minutes, I would know the exact location of the man the press always described as being at "an undisclosed location."

"Maybe I should flip Cheney off." I said.

"Secret Service might not approve." My girlfriend cautioned. "Could be construed as threatening the vice president. We're at war after all."

I did flip off Cheney, but not in grand style, both arms thrust over my head, middle fingers raised high and defiant. As a helicopter thundered overhead, and as lines of motorcycle cops flanked a line of limos and SUV's, escorting the cardio-challenged man out of town, I held out a timid hand with my one-finger salute.

We still live in a liberal western democracy. Cheney's visit was announced in the papers, and three or four hundred demonstrators came out to protest his speech. Several made it into the Commonwealth Club, only to be ejected and arrested for heckling the vice president. I had my own not inconsiderable history of visibly, even dramatically protesting the powers-that-be. Yet I did feel cowed standing on that street corner, meekly giving Cheney the bird.

Perhaps it was the vacant street and silent spectators and harsh sunset on top of my girlfriend's warning. I'd seen elected politicians come through where I lived before. Eisenhower when I was little kid with my parents. Hubert Humphrey. Spiro Agnew when he was in the middle of his legal troubles. Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan. There'd always been pomp and excitement and crowds. This grim motorcade was how I imagined the leaders of Nazi Germany or Stalinist Russia were greeted when they traveled at the height of the terror in their respective regimes. Except that the citizenry probably turned out in fake adulation so as to avoid the unwanted suspicions of the secret police.

What do I expect in a liberal stronghold like San Francisco, you counter. There could have been block after block of enthusiastic supporters, had the administration chosen to rally the faithful. *We're at war; you repeat my girlfriend's words.* We were at war before, yet public officials still cultivated their public exposure and contact with the common folk. *But we're fighting a different kind of enemy, you insist. Fanatic Muslim terrorists who might strike anytime, anywhere, without warning.* There were similar dangers in previous times. Mad bombers. Anti-war extremists. Crazed assassins. I admit it's different this time however. It's as if this

administration dove into the bunker on September 11, 2001 with George W. Bush, and hasn't come out since.

America isn't a police state yet, despite John Ashcroft's efforts to the contrary. Rather, America is a bunker state, complete with a shadow government ready to take control from the safety of its undisclosed location deep in some NORAD-style bomb shelter somewhere. No doubt much like al-Qaeda's sophisticated cave complexes in Tora Bora, ironically enough.

It's hard to imagine the other presidential administrations I've live through hunkering down and hiding, had some version of September 11 occurred earlier. Not affable old Ike, nor war hero Kennedy, nor consummate politician Johnson. Much as I despised Nixon and considered Ford a buffoon, neither would have jumped on Air Force One and hightailed it to some military base to hide out. Carter would have sat in the White House, reading his Bible. That old Cold Warrior, Ronald Reagan? Don't make me laugh. Even Bush senior would have comported himself with greater dignity. And Clinton, well, he would have continued boffing interns while Osama bin Laden brought the White House down around his, err, ears. No, Junior Bush's duck-and-cover administration is truly unique in the apparent lack of intestinal fortitude among its members.

Now, since when did I care about George W's yellow streak? For that matter, when was I concerned about such fine distinctions between one or another lackey of the American ruling class? Ever since the government made it absolutely clear that its priority is to protect our elected officials, not the American people.

I grew up in the era of mutually assured destruction, when nuclear annihilation was a daily threat and we played duck-and-cover for real in my elementary school classrooms. Back then, plans existed to whisk away top government leaders to underground safety in case of nuclear war, while the general public was assured that a few feet of dirt shoveled on top of a wooden door would protect them from a nuclear blast. This wasn't rubbed into our faces quite so blatantly, however. Now, while we await what everybody in the Bush administration is saying will be an inevitable attack by terrorists using weapons of mass destruction, we can console ourselves with the knowledge that at least Dick Cheney will be safe and sound and running the shadow government from his undisclosed location.

Marvelous.

At least we know that it's more important to keep Bush's oil buddies alive than it is to insure the safety and security of the American people. And in case you hadn't caught the subtext yet, it seems more important to keep Dick Cheney alive than his boss, GW; a clear indication of who is really running this administration. As the joke goes, Junior Bush keeps waking up in a sweat because he realizes he's just a heartbeat away from the presidency. You'd think I'd be pleased that the idea our government functions to serve and protect its citizenry has been exposed for the myth that it is. No more illusions. No more false consciousness. In my experience though, such a dire revelation rarely produces the sense of outrage and desire to revolt I'd like. Instead, it contributes to a greater sense of pessimism and fatalism I think there's been a palpable change of mood in this country since September 11, 2001 in this very direction, helped along by the spate of corporate scandals, the stock market crash-and-burn, the generally dismal economy, the erosion of civil liberties, the prospect of continued terrorism, and the dubious promise of endless war.

I don't think this mood shift amounts to a fundamental sea change. More like setting the tone for the next decade, much as the 1950's were characterized by naïve optimism. The despondency and inaction that may taint this decade are a far cry from the tumult and turmoil of the 1960's, as an ebullient hope for dramatic social change ran up against an entrenched status quo. The turning inward of the '70's and the unbridled greed and accumulation of the '80's and '90's were still more positive than the current climate, the attitude being: "If I can't change the world, I can change myself. Or at least I can make a lot of money so it doesn't really matter." Instead, folks are hunkering down like Dick Cheney at his undisclosed location, hoping that the shitstorm passes without doing them much harm. Not a scenario for protest in the streets let alone social revolution.

At least Cheney has the rest of us, the military to protect him and the general populous to buffer him from those evil international terrorists.

I'm not letting it get me down though. In fact, my mood is quite positive. Nothing like turning 50 to set one's priorities straight. I've mentioned in a previous column how much more cautious I've become in my old age. My focus on getting as much writing done as I can before I kick couldn't be sharper. Thanks to my move, I've been able to set myself up with the kind of writing environment that I've always desired; spacious, quiet, with my ever-expanding library all neatly shelved and available for reference.

You can tell I'm not too worried that we're on the verge of a fascist state, or that Ashcroft's secret police will come busting down my door any minute now. I haven't retired yet to the fully sedentary life of a gentleman writer. Aside from working full time, I still go to demonstrations and do political work. If everything goes as planned, I should be in big trouble with the powers-that-be by spring of next year when I launch a pet project I've been working on, off and on for the past couple of years. A president who can barely speak English, an administration that blunders from one scandal to another, and a military that is unable to plug simple leaks of classified information isn't about to goosestep us into an American version of the Third Reich any time soon. I mean, can you imagine Hitler taking as long to decide whether to invade Poland as Junior Bush is about invading Iraq?

My attitude was much different when I was younger. One hundred and eighty degrees, you might say. At 16, I thought I was immortal, or at least I thought I had all the time in the world to do what I wanted. I was reckless and careless, doing things that often endangered my life. Peace and quiet was the last thing I wanted. At the same time, I was deathly afraid Nixon was going to suspend the Constitution and throw every anti-war New Leftist activist into concentration camps. That's what everybody on the Left thought would happen. Well, guess what? Nixon came and went without establishing a fascist state. Similar predictions of impending fascism heralded Reagan's terms in office, with about the same results. So I'm not convinced that the far more inept administration of Dick Cheney via Junior Bush will bring about the fascism that heavyweights like Nixon and Reagan could not.

Haven't I said in past columns that we live in a fascist country?

Not at all. I have quoted Karl Korsch to the effect that we have the economic base for fascism in this country's corporate command economy. What we lack is a fascist political superstructure. And that's important to note. Our secret police, the FBI, are pretty bad, and getting worse given their new powers to combat terrorism under the Patriot Act and other such legislation. They are not the Gestapo or the KGB however. Not by a long shot. The Patriot Act itself is in a long line of repressive legislation dating all the way back to the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798. Certainly we should be concerned with the erosion to civil liberties under current anti-terrorist legislation. What we shouldn't do is label the recent spate of repressive legislation mere symptoms of an American fascism already in place.

It's the old story of the boy who cried wolf. The Left cries fascism every time a repressive Republican comes into office, pretty soon nobody will pay attention when real fascism comes along. The Left probably won't recognize real fascism either when it bites them on their ass. That's because it's just as likely to come from the Democratic Party leftist types are always ask-

ing us to hold our nose and support. Or perhaps from a demagogic populist third party type, which definitely leaves out the incredibly awkward Ralph Nader. Yes, we're living in repressive and militaristic times, and yes it's likely to get even more repressive and militaristic, at least for the near future. We don't, however, live in the equivalent of Weimar, Germany circa the first three months of 1933.

(Nor are we living in a suddenly righteous, suddenly democratic, suddenly completely justified America, by the way. I'm scribbling some of this column after returning from vacationing in New York City, of which I'll write more about next column. Several of my anarcho-commie friends in the City were so enraged by the attack on the World Trade Center they've all but volunteered to work for Bush's reelection campaign. More about THAT next column as well.)

Ah, but haven't I argued that there isn't a lick of difference between the Republican and Democratic parties? And isn't one-party rule, even *de facto* one-party rule essentially totalitarian, if not fascistic?

There is absolutely no denying that the American two-party system could easily fit within any one conventional European-style liberal party, with ideological room to spare. This has been the case from the country's inception, thanks in part to the winner-take-all electoral system we have, as opposed to the proportional representation under which parliamentary democracies operate. However many parties vie for a voting majority, only one wins, which means our electoral system has a built in tendency toward centrism, with electoral parties competing to capture the lowest common consensus. Which in turn tends to narrow and simplify political debate to two sides and two parties. Couple this tendency with corporate campaign financing, both the quantity and even-handedness of it, and you have the essential recipe for America's bland yet restrictive politics.

The occasional social democrat does emerge from liberal ranks, as does the odd reactionary from conservative constituencies, but by and large American politicians of whatever stripe tend toward the middle of the road. As I write these words, what little Democratic Party resistance to Junior Bush's warmongering has all but collapsed and both the House and Senate have voted overwhelmingly to give him the power to attack Iraq. Indeed, the percentage in support of this proposed war on Iraq in Congress is greater than that garnered by Senior Bush for the 1991 Gulf War. As one commentator put it, given the upcoming elections and a majority of Americans in support of doing something about Saddam Hussein and Iraq (even if that majority was manufactured by clever media manipulation), the Democrats are going along to cover their political asses and insure their reelection. So despite the determined and honorable stance of folks like Barbara Lee in the House and Robert Byrd in the Senate, it's clear we can't look toward the Democrats for any serious opposition to this impending war.

On the whole, I am encouraged by the grassroots anti-war response that has been growing around the country, from peace vigils and peace camps to nonviolent occupations of various politicians' offices. I'm especially pleased that a rising tide of anti-war resistance might go some distance toward counteracting the greater sense of pessimism and fatalism I mentioned above. With the spread of popular resistance however have come the usual vanguardist parasites. Chief among them remains the Stalinoid Workers World Party/International Action Center/ANSWER Coalition, but a new and equally scummy player has recently raised its ugly head. While on the JetBlue airplane back from New York on October 6, I watched news coverage of the mass anti-war rallies around the country, sponsored by the Not In Our Name coalition. With 8,000 turnout in San Francisco and 20,000 in New York, this seemed a promising new development, until Not In Our Name spokesman and veteran Revolutionary Communist Party member Carl Dix came on the air.

Not In Our Name was initiated by the secretive, ultra-authoritarian, Maoist RCP, whose main slogan has been "Mao more than ever." Lead by their chairman-in-exile Bob Avakian, these folks consider the bloody Chinese Cultural Revolution—as well as the murderous Gang of Four that rose to power on its mountain of corpses—to be the pinnacle of socialism. They're also proud supporters of Peru's butchering Sindero Luminoso/Shining Path. Until recently, these folks considered homosexuality a diseased product of capitalist decadence. And while the latest RCP constitution has done away with their long-time homophobic stance, these Leninist asswipes have shown little compunction about infiltrating and taking over broad based progressive organizations, or throwing up front organizations to exploit various popular issues and causes. In the mid 1970's, they decimated the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, a popular and effective anti-Vietnam War organization, by taking it over. Their current front organizations include the October 22 Coalition Against Police Brutality and the Criminalization of a Generation, the Stolen Lives Project, and Refuse and Resist. The central organizing tool of the Not In Our Name organization—it's Pledge of Resistance—is an old RCP gimmick as well, first used in the late 1970's by an RCP front group that worked on border and immigration issues called La Resistancia.

The RCP often has great ideas, such as Not In Our Name or No Business As Usual, which are completely wasted because, of course, they're the ones doing the organizing. The RCP frequently allows its pet project organizations a lot of autonomy to start off with, but eventually, being the Leninist vanguard party that it is, the RCP gets more and more "hands on," folks inside and outside the front organization start realizing it's a tool, and whatever initial groundswell of enthusiasm is converted into a tiny group sycophantically following the RCP line. I must admit that the RCP is far more hip than the lumbering, stodgy WWP/IAC/ANSWER, even that it has a certain star quality with political celebrities like Mumia Abu Jamal, rock celebrities like Rage Against The Machine, and Hollywood celebrities like Susan Sarandon endorsing their efforts. I'm afraid that Not In Our Name offers no real alternative in terms of organizing for the burgeoning anti-war movement however. Instead, what we have are two Leninist dinosaurs trying to dominate national anti-war organizing which, along with a third in the Trotskyist International Socialist Organization on campuses hoping to control student organizing, threatens to smother any truly broad-based anti-war movement.

My solution is not to endorse social democratic and pacifist organizations like the National Coalition for Peace and Justice. I think folks have to seize the grassroots and organize independently of any so-called national coalition. We need to organize and act locally, prepare ourselves for civil disobedience and direct action, and bide our time. In my personal opinion, the shit will hit once Junior Bush invades Iraq. Folks will take to the streets, and more importantly take the streets away from these fucked up vanguard types. That's when we'll see the most potential for popular anti-war resistance to achieve broad, independent organization.

More on all these themes next issue, as well as my first-hand take on the disappointing anti-IMF/World Bank demos in Washington DC on September 27 and 28.

...ALL THE NEWS THAT FITS...

ERROR... I gave the wrong address for Tommy Strange's zine *Rattlesnake* in MRR #230. The correct address is 2811 Folsom St., San Francisco, CA 94110.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... You can find the "lost" Hooligan column at the new, improved http://www.huahuacoyotl.com. To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooli-

gan3@mindspring.com.

This is the WAR issue. I've written about Iraq and war and the fucked up Middle East here recently. I doubt I have much to say that won't be said elsewhere. I guess I'm in support of a regime change in Baghdad, as well as in Washington DC. Will a war prompt Crucifix to reunite? Will it lead to a rise of crust? Will Reagan come out of retirement to kick some commie ass? The one thing I do know for sure is that it's a lot easier for politicians to send other people to their deaths for their geopolitical games of power than it is for them to put their own lives on the line. To satisfy their mania for conquest, lives are squandered.

Mike from Kill the Man wrote in these pages a few months ago about problems with samples of copywritten material on a 7" he was putting out. I'm going to enter this debate both barrels blazing. For many years bands have been using samples from movies and television on their records between songs. Bands have used "found" artwork out of context and subverted its meaning. However, in today's overly litigious society, record and CD manufacturing plants and printers are clamping down on the unauthorized duplication of copywritten material. I'm sure some will cry "censorship" at this, but consider that the manufacturers are only trying to protect themselves against a potential lawsuit. But this brings me to my point here. What do samples really add to a record anyway? Not much—in fact after a few dozen listens, they cease to be clever and are just annoying. I know I'm not the only one who taped the Civil Disobedience 7" without the long samples. I would personally recommend against submitting a record or CD to be manufactured with any unauthorized samples or "found" artwork. This could result in potentially expensive and time consuming delays, and for what? A clever use of five seconds of Clint Eastwood's witty dialogue from *Dirty Harry*? OK, here's the crux of the issue to me. Punk should be an expression of original creative impulse. I don't think there is a need to plunder Hollywood, because we can do better on our own. Original artwork and music always looks and sounds better than something you scanned, taped, burned, or downloaded that someone else thought up first. DIY should mean doing it better than the industry, not a half assed parody. I'm sure some people will bring up the U2/Negativland scandal and what a fight for free speech that was or whatever. But I don't see the point of going to bat for a few seconds of someone else's material on a thrash 7". It's just not that important to the music, which should be the main focus from the git-go.

OK, Madeline wrote about this in *Razorcake* and also in *Tight Pants* zine, but I have to weigh in on the pressing issue of the day. Vikings Vs. Pirates. I am firmly in the Viking camp on this issue. I think puffy shirts, pantaloons, hoop ear rings and gold doubloons are goofy and chainmail, helms, axes, and slain beasts are fucking boss. Vikings would devastate pirates in a fair fight, slay all poseurs, then sail their longboats to a Slayer or Bathory show and go berzerker style in the pit. Pirates are from where? The Caribbean? Yeah, I love that punk rock from Haiti and the Netherlands Antilles, right? Vikings are from Scandinavia, where much great punk and hardcore dwells. Vikings pretty much took over Northern Europe and had bad ass broaches and swords and stuff with dragons on them. Pirates had like those double breasted coats and mostly got caught and sunk or hung. The Skull and Crossbones is about the only really cool thing Pirates had going for them. Fukk it up Viking Style in 2002!

Finally, my favorite current band, DS 13, is breaking up. But before they do, I'm flying them over to play Thrash Fest 4 in Minneapolis, December 29th. This will be their only US show and last show ever. Also appearing will be Limp Wrist, Tear It Up, Nine Shocks Terror, Holding On, Caustic Christ, Damage Deposit, Path of Destruction, and perhaps a few more. For more info, check out my website at www.havocrex.com Bands, stop asking to get on the bill. I mean it, just stop.

CrimethInc. Workers' Collective Bullet-in

Dumb Ideas for Getting into Trouble, draft 1!

This is a rough selection of the latest submissions for our upcoming anarchist cookbook, which will contain more possibilities like these (and more thoroughly explored). You're all encouraged to submit recipes of your own: email cookbook@crimethinc.com, or write CrimethInc. Recipes for Disaster, PO Box 1963, Olympia, WA 98507 USA

* You could make a paint-dripping apparatus to go on the back of a bicycle (a can of paint with a hole in it and a device to direct the flow), and bike down the streets painting trails on them. The trails could lead to important locations, or could (seen, theoretically, from above) spell out words or form pictures from the streets of the city...the test run of this idea, carried out in Montreal, was entitled "The People Pour Into the Street."

* You can make a 100 foot stencil! Get a roll of painter's drop paper of that length, and cut letters and designs into it. Get a can or three of "mismixed" paint at any local hardware store (these are cheaper, or free), and a paint roller. Late one night, with three people, deploy the stencil on a concrete surface in a matter of minutes: one person unrolling it, one person behind them rolling the paint through it, a third person behind rolling up the paper. Engage lookouts if you have a couple more people interested. Provided the fire department isn't called in to wash the paint away before it dries (as happened to some feminists who did this in Boston a number of years ago), there will be an exciting new message to the world downtown—and another message inside of it: public space can be reclaimed.

* For how-to guides on disabling the gas at fast food franchises (an effective, low-risk daily method for interfering with their ability to do business) and building loud homemade horns (a design known as the Boviphonic Ohm Cannon, to be exact), consult the second version of the second issue of *Hunter/Gatherer* (the CrimethInc. Journal of Folk Science and Martial Arts issue, to be precise). One can be obtained free (postage donation welcome) from CrimethInc. Urban Pirates, PO Box 2133, Greensboro, NC 27402, USA.

* If you put visine (an eye-wash solution) in a businessman's drink, it will send him to the bathroom pretty quickly, and keep him there for some time—working class bartenders have been doing this for years.

* If you go over the plug of any electrical device with clear nail polish, it won't turn on when plugged in—try doing this to corporate soda machines, or to items for sale in corporate chain stores, or to...

* If you don't look like a maniacal criminal, you can go to a corporate coffeeshop around noon, insisting angrily that when you stopped by that morning to pick up coffee for everyone at your workplace, you asked for soymilk in the coffee—and didn't discover they'd given you real milk until you arrived at work with the twelve coffees. They'll probably be quick to make it up to you.

* If you need expensive equipment to film a documentary or

accomplish something similar (record an album with expensive equipment, for example), you can purchase it from a place with a return policy that gives you a couple weeks before the trial period is over. Shoot all the footage (or etc.) that you need and return it for your money back.

* If you want to keep a video account of a cross country trip you're taking, just go each day to a Walmart or similar store selling video camera equipment and use the display model to tape that day's installment.

* You can establish an alternative news service in the bathroom stalls of your neighborhood—simply go to a selection of stalls (in gas stations, office buildings, schools, libraries, etc.) and write up that week's unreported news (from www.indymedia.org, www.infoshop.org, or a similar source).

* You can go to Karaoke bars and sing your own words to popular songs, as a way to get news or ideas across in unexpected environments.

* Back in the heyday of Napster, you could put tracks of radical propaganda online disguised as popular songs (same length, same title, etc.), so people seeking to download the songs could be pleasantly surprised—there are still cyberspaces where this is possible.

* If you can rent videos under a fake identity, you could tape your own radical "unmovie previews" onto them advertising adventures that can take place in real life.

* You can cook food on the engine of a driving car! Just wrap it in tinfoil and wedge it in safe and tight. With a little practice, you ought to be able to get the cooking times down for different recipes...books have already been published (and put online, perhaps?) by others who have done this.

* You can babysit! Seriously, parents—especially single parents—need your support so they can still be part of the community and have lives of their own. This is as effective a method for fighting capitalism and social alienation as any window breaking.

* You could get a job at a nasty business with the intention of quitting at a moment which would be inopportune for them. You could do this with friends for extra effect—imagine sabotaging a grand opening this way!

* You can increase the possible visibility of any action you do—synchronized job-quitting, poster pasting, whatever—by leaving a press release with the local media. If this is an illegal action and you want to be especially safe, print out your announcement at a library or cyber-cafe, and handle it and the envelope with latex gloves. To disguise the use of latex gloves, wear one of those sweaters with long sleeves that hang down past your hands—you'll look more cute than dangerous.

* Try masturbating in a bathtub with your ears under water—as you get more carried away, you may be able to hear your pulse pounding quicker and quicker; this might be exciting!

* Polaroid film, while environmentally wasteful, is the easiest for those taking photos on a budget of zero—the film canisters are readily pocketed, and no developing expenses need be paid. You can make colorful artwork with these, too, by scratching and pressing on the photos as they develop: they'll come out with crazy colors and designs in the picture. You can make a handwarmer out of the used film canister once you're done with it, by simply connecting the wires—it'll be quite hot for a few minutes. There are reputed to be whole websites exploring other things that can be done with used Polaroid film canisters.

* Try going to Walmart or a similar corporate superstore with a secret plan. Take a walk around the aisles and make a shopping list of a few products that, used at the same moment by "radical shoppers" in different parts of the store, could effectively shut the place down for the day. Imagine if, instead of having to travel across the country to join in a mass symbolic protest against corporate power, small cells of people could demonstrate public opposition by shutting down the megastores locally. Once one group figured out how to do this, others could follow their example, and the omnipresence of these identical superstores would suddenly change from their triumph to their Achilles' heel.

* There are also combinations of products that supposedly, when entered in the cash register at such chain stores, cause it to freeze up—because they can be used together to make certain illegal drugs. A manager is then called over to OK the purchase. If one could find out specifically what these combinations were, and then have a group of people all buy them at once, this could also be used to temporarily incapacitate a store.

* For a combination of the paralyzing-the-store action and the taking-advantage-of-the-return-policy action, go to a place like Walmart that offers a money-back guarantee and buy *all* of their stock of a given product that is in special demand—then return it all the next day. Repeat as desired.

* A remote-controlled model airplane could be used to sabotage a speech by some motherfucker in an open-air graduation ceremony or similar event. Imagine the little aircraft, trailing a little banner, dive-bombing the speaker at the podium as he waves his arms and tries to get out of the way! If necessary, perhaps the airplane could be directed by two radios, set to the same frequency: one at a secluded launch location nearby, which would guide it until it entered the theater of action, where it would be guided by another radio stealthily operated by a kid on location. Some practice would be in order first, obviously—but next time the university engages some murderer air force general to come talk about the patriotic necessity of genocide, it shouldn't be easy for him.

* Instead of getting arrested for blocking traffic, you can just obstruct traffic with ...more traffic! In a city that needs paralyzing (e.g. during the Republican National Convention, etc.), drive slowly and stupidly on freeways or important streets—in convey, if possible. Better yet, a car could break down in the middle of everything. Better than better yet, it could catch on fire. This happens anyway, sometimes, you know! If there's already a horrible traffic jam, the fire engines will have a hell of a time getting through it to get to the car, and will just make things worse when they do. Any delegates or paparazzi who are driving—or police headed for the demonstration?—will never make it.

* Alternatively, you could use two junker cars (recently purchased, and not traceable to any person, of course) to close down a section of street. This was applied effectively for the Reclaim the Streets action in Washington, DC summer of 2001: a parade set out from one location on an undisclosed route, while the two cars were driven to either end of the main commercial drag, and abandoned—tires slashed—in the middle of the intersections. Sound systems, etc. had been hidden ahead of time in the dumpsters (early observations had been made to doublecheck the days and times when they were emptied, of course), and when the parade showed up, the street was filled and held for hours.

* It seems like it should be possible to take advantage of existing environmental features of cities to transform those environments: use heating vents on buildings or hand-dryers in bathrooms to blow up big inflatable sculptures, use fire hydrants to fill street barricades or fuel DIY. water cannons to return fire from police water cannons...

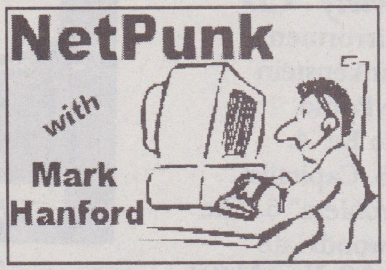
* Fortune cookies can be a great way to get ideas out in a fun way. Tailor the fortunes to the situation and the demographic who will be receiving them—the fortune cookies the anarchist contingent of the 4th of July parade in Greensboro gave out contained quotes by the "founding fathers" with anarchist implications, the ones we gave out at the CrimethInc. "Day at the Movies" in Olympia or the "Wake Up the Earth" festival in Boston contained selections from the "declassifieds" in the fourth *Harbinger* and various personal challenges/encourage-

ments. If you can't make actual fortune cookies (not an easy thing to do—we haven't mastered it!), just make another variety of cookies, put fortunes with them, put them in little baggies if you'll be giving them to morons who value "sanitation" over ecological concerns, and call them fortune cookies—no one will mind!

* Speaking of—it's not hard to reserve a section in most town parades. Usually you just need to fill out a form and give a (fake?) name and contact for your organization. For the July 4th parade in Greensboro mentioned elsewhere in these notes, we had two groups: a peace march, with various signs and so on, and an anarchist group, with a marching band, home-engineered circus bicycles, people giving out the aforementioned fortune cookies and other materials, fire-breathers, and a flying circle A with a 23 foot wingspan. For that matter, why not set up an anarchist table at the next street festival in your area? When we did this in Boston, we gave out hundreds upon hundreds of magazines, zines, and posters to locals who were thrilled to find something out of the ordinary.

* And, once you've taken over parades and street festivals, why not be even more ambitious? In Olympia, where there is a vaguely sympathetic independent movie theater, we rented it out for a day and showed a selection of potentially radicalizing mainstream movies and documentaries on radical activities already taking place. We charged money for the mainstream movies (which we had to rent from the company that owns film reels), showed the documentaries for free, and transformed the environment of this movie theater for the whole day: there were free literature tables (like at a good punk show), discussions between movies, a silk-screening workshop upstairs, and even free massages from a professional masseuse in the lobby. Start-up capital for this project was about two thousand dollars, but we got it all back. It was a really effective way to introduce people who are used to going to movie theaters, but would never go to a protest or punk show, to radical possibilities. Next time we do this, we'll take it over for a full weekend, and include more workshops and public events in the program.

Consult www.crimethinc.com for more dumb ideas!



As you might guess, there are tons of websites dealing with issues surrounding September 11, the war in Afghanistan, the continuation and escalation of war with Iraq, and the stupidity of GW. I'm going to attempt to point you to some of the more useful and thoughtful ones in this month's column.

One of the best jumping off points for an understanding of the why and wherefore of conflict in the Middle East is MidEast Web at http://www.mideastweb.org/ . This site contains all kinds of information on the Middle East, including recipes and the like, but it also has an excellent section on the political history of the region dating back thousands of years. Another nice article discusses the need to not take sides and support both the Israelis and the Palestinians. This is a fantastic resource.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has a lot to do with all politics in the region, and that includes issues in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and other Middle Eastern countries (for a decent map of the Middle East visit http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east.html). It is the close ties that the US has with Israel, combined with our need for oil in the region that is, at least in my opinion, a large part of the reason that the US government is so interested in controlling who has power in the region.

So, because of all this, GW wants to go to war with Iraq (plus, it might help the economy) and we continue to bomb the shit out of Afghanistan. As this is the current conflict, a lot of the anti-war sites provide excellent information.

You can start your surfing at peace.protest.net (http://pax.protest.net/), where you'll find calendar listings for anti-war and anti-racism protests, meetings and the like, listed by country and state. You'll also find links to a number of online petitions to add your voice to the growing opposition to the bombing of the MidEast.

One of those petition sites is the Iraq Peace Pledge (http://www.peacepledge.org/). Add your name to over 17,000 others who want to see the US stay out of a war with Iraq. You can also download forms to canvas your neighborhood or school or punk show or whatever.

Another great resource is International A.N.S.W.E.R. (Act Now To Stop War and End Racism) at http://www.internationalanswer.org/ . This site is organized into two parts. One talks about how you can take action in national rallies, and the other provides current information on the cause. This organization seems to be intent on mobilizing large numbers of people to stop the warmongering.

And yet another resource is Nonviolence Web at http://www.nonviolence.org/ . It has a lot of articles dealing with Iraq, Afghanistan, and other peace issues.

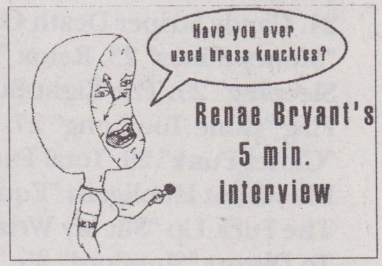
Also worth a visit is the Physicians for Social Responsibility website at http://www.psr.org/ and the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space at http://www.space4peace.org/ . While both are more focused on anti-nuke issues, they are also concerned with a war with Iraq—especially since the hawks in the government want to put mini-nuke tips on the "smart" bombs.

If you need anti-war and anti-Bush slogans, stickers, posters, etc. then I have two sites for you. First is Posters For Peace at http://reclaimthestreetsnyc.tao.ca/posters/ , which is more related to September 11 retaliations than it is with Iraq. The other is a Bush parody site at http://www.gwbush.com/ . They are selling stickers, t-shirts, and buttons with some hilarious (and true) anti-Bush slogans.

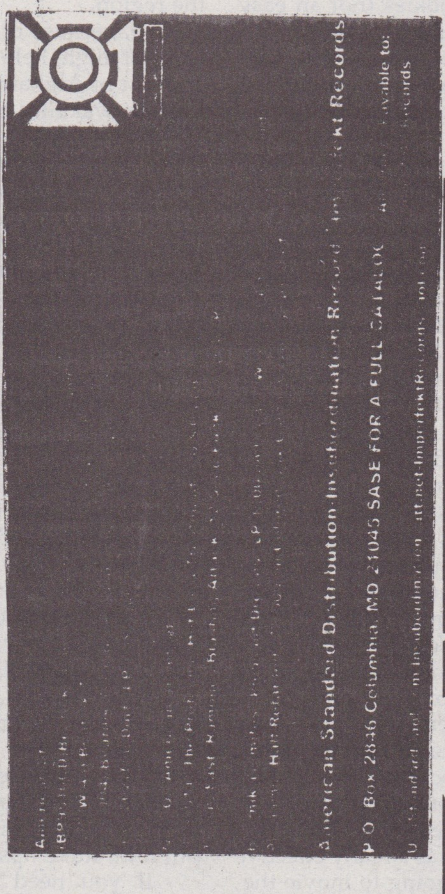
Finally, on the day I wrote this, John Walker Lindh (the American Taliban) was sentenced to twenty years in prison. While I don't exactly think that Lindh is a smart guy, I question his sentence on grounds that he did not participate directly in the attacks on the WTC, but rather was a mercenary in anther country's civil war. That he was fighting on the side of the Taliban, who I would never invite to a holiday party, is not the issue. He'll be lucky not to get himself killed by some America-loving criminal in prison.

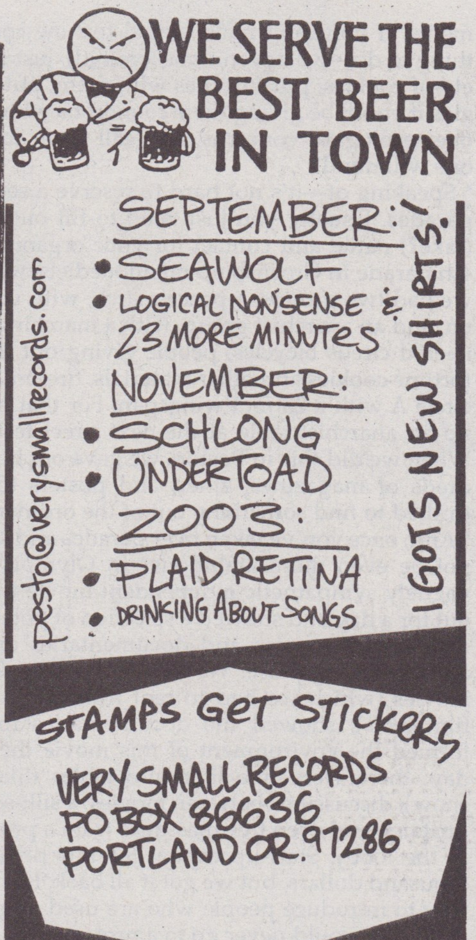
Anyway, I was wondering if anyone else felt the way that I do, so I was happy to find http://www.freejohnwalker.net/ . At the point I write this, the site hasn't been updated with an opinion on the sentence, but everything they've written still holds true. Read it and think.

OK, so I'm done for this month. Fire an email at me at netpunk@diehippiedie.com or visit my columns in the Netpunk section of the diehippiedie.com website. Until next month... keep protesting.



Since I am a "year-round" elementary school teacher, I have September, two weeks in December, January, and May off. I work all the other months including the summer (meaning no spring or summer break). Many





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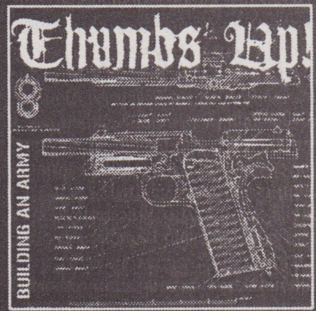

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people aren't familiar with the year-round school system, either because they don't live in Southern California or because when they attended school it didn't exist. Now that I have completed my master's degree, I am free to do longer tours with my band during those months. That is exactly what I did with the first two weeks of my September "off-track" month. Last year we toured at this time but with a different lead guitarist—a drug addicted paranoid freak, who caused much drama on our small northwest tour. This time we traveled with a different guitarist, covering just nine states. No drug drama this time, so that was a bonus.

We usually take my Astro Van but unfortunately its on its last leg (just enough strength to get me to work and back until I buy a new vehicle). My new guitarist, Ryan, offered to drive his little Explorer with a trailer attached. This was cool but entirely too uncomfortably squished. We played: Sacramento (three dates), Oregon (two dates), Washington, Idaho (oh, yeah, that was a bastard of a drive), Utah, and Colorado (oh that drive was insane also). Since I waited too long to book New Mexico and Arizona we wound up driving 20 hours from Colorado to California. So that made the other drives pale in comparison. Now, any drive under 20 hours is a short drive. I wish I had some insane tour stories to tell, but I don't. The tour was amazingly fun without major band drama. Of course my drummer and I almost tore out each other's throats at one point but somehow made up by the very end. We met some really cool people and played with some really amazing bands. We got some gas money, food, and shelter everywhere we went, sold some merch...to spread the All Or Nothing HC news, and made some new friends (which is the best part of touring). The only thing that sucked about the tour is that we only played one show with one other female in a band. This kind of bummed me out, but there were a lot of women at the shows participating so that made up for it. Some awesome bands we played with were: The Broke, Whiskey Rebels, Shots Fired, A Moments Loss, American Terrorist (with the female drummer), Fracas, Rolo Tomasi (which get the award for best band name of the tour (stolen from *LA Confidential*—they have created a new style of hardcore which I have named "hugcore" for their singer's outbursts of hugging the audience members), 18 Deadly Strikes, Blind Nil, Edible, The Great Redneck Hope, and many more, but I can't remember their names because I don't have my damn tour journal with me.

I can understand a little better now why musicians have a hard time working when they're not touring. Your body gets into a weird tour rhythm that is definitely hard to shake off. This was the most difficult time I have every had trying to go back on track to teaching after having been off for one month. My sleeping, eating, and exercising patterns got jacked. I may have to get "Henry Rollins wierd" and map out the 24 hr. Fitness gyms on our touring routes. Not exercising and being bent up in a car for multiple hours fucked my shit up. Don't get me wrong, I know I am fucking fortunate to be able to tour and I am grateful in addition to being sore. This is going to be a short column because I have edit my 34 students' essays before tomorrow arrives. One of my students lives in a shelter with her mother. This really breaks my heart and makes me feel even more fortunate.

Oooh! Internet zine news....*Factsheet 5* is being resurrected, you can send your submissions to po box 4660 Arlington, VA 22204. Here is some information for the girl bands out there. Elise from Malaysia is looking for writers and contribution for her zine, you can contact her at grrrlrebelzine@lycos.com. The people at coolgrrrls.com are doing an all girl comp. go to their site for more info. I guess that's it for this month, I promise next month's column will be a bit more entertaining. Our new CD, *Search for the Strength,* is out now distribution through Sound of California. As always you can contact me at webmistress@ontherag.net, PO Box 251 Norco, CA 02860-0251, and www.ontherag.net.

BRUSSELS—Making the case for United Nations intervention against the United States, Iranian President Mohammad Khatami told the organization yesterday that military action will be "unavoidable" unless the US agrees to destroy its weapons of mass destruction.

In a much-anticipated speech to a special session of the UN General Assembly held in Brussels, Khatami launched a blistering attack against American leader George W. Bush, accusing him of defying UN resolutions and using his country's wealth to line the pockets of wealthy cronies at a time when the people of his country make do without such basic social programs as national health insurance.

"Nearly two years ago, the civilized world watched as this evil and corrupt dictator subverted the world's oldest representative democracy in an illegal coup d'état," said Khatami. "Since then the Bush regime has continued America's systematic repression of ethnic and religious minorities and threatened international peace and security throughout the world. Thousands of political opponents and ordinary citizens have been subjected to arbitrary arrest and imprisonment. Basic civil rights have been violated. This rogue state has flouted the international community on legal, economic and environmental issues. It has even ignored the Geneva Conventions on the treatment of prisoners of war by denying that its illegal invasion of Afghanistan—which has had a destabilizing influence throughout Central Asia—was a war at all."

Khatami said the US possesses the world's largest arsenal of nuclear weapons, weapons "that, when first developed, were used immediately to kill half a million innocent civilians just months after acquiring them. No nation that has committed nuclear genocide can be entrusted with weapons of mass destruction."

"Bush has invaded Afghanistan and is now threatening Iraq. We cannot stand by and do nothing while danger gathers. We can't allow for this tyrant to strike first. We have an obligation to act preemptively to protect the world from this evildoer," Khatami said.

As delegates punctuated his words with bursts of applause, Khatami noted that US intelligence agencies had helped establish and fund the world's most virulent terrorist organizations, including Al Qaeda, and the Taliban regime that harbored them. "The US created the Islamist extremists who attacked its people on September 11, 2001," he stated, "and Bush's illegitimate junta cynically exploited those attacks to repress political dissidents, make sweetheart deals with politically-connected corporations and revive 19th century-style colonial imperialism."

Khatami asked the UN to set a deadline for Bush to step down in favor of president-in-exile Al Gore, the legitimate winner of the 2000 election, the results of which were subverted through widespread voting irregularities and intimidation. "We favor not regime change, but rather restoration and liberation," he said. In addition, Khatami said, the US must dismantle its weapons of mass destruction, guarantee basic human rights to all citizens and agree to abide by international law or "face the consequences."

Most observers agree that those "consequences" would likely include a prolonged bombing campaign targeting major US cities and military installations, followed by a ground inva-

sion led by European forces. "Civilian casualties would likely be substantial," said a French military analyst. "But the American people must be liberated from tyranny."

Khatami's charges, which were detailed in a dossier prepared by French President Jacques Chirac, were dismissed by a representative of the American strongman as "lies, half-truths and misguided beliefs, motivated by the desire to control a country with oil, natural gas and other natural resources." National Security Minister Condoleezza Rice denied that the US maintains weapons of mass destruction and invited UN inspectors to visit Washington to "see for themselves that our weapons are designed only to keep the peace, subject of course to full respect for American sovereignty."

The UN is expected to reject any conditions for or restrictions on arms inspections.

Experts believe that the liberation of the United States will require a large ground force of European and other international troops, followed by a massive rebuilding program costing billions of euros. "Even before Bush, the American political system was a shambles," said Prof. Salvatore Deluna of the University of Madrid. "Their single-party plutocracy will have to be reshaped into true parliamentary-style democracy. Moreover, the economy will have to be retooled from its current military dictatorship model—in which a third of the federal budget goes to arms, and taxes are paid almost exclusively by the working class—to one in which basic human needs such as education and poverty are addressed. Their infrastructure is a mess; they don't even have a national passenger train system. Fixing a failed state of this size will require many years."

CRASS COMMERICIALISM: TO AFGHANISTAN AND BACK is available everywhere. If you want a copy of TO AFGHANISTAN AND BACK signed by me, please send $19 (includes shipping to anywhere in the US) to: Ted Rall, PO Box 2092, Times Square Station, New York NY 10108.

CRASSER COMMERCIALISM: ATTITUDE: THE NEW SUBVERSIVE POLITICAL CARTOONISTS, is also out. It contains cartoons by and interviews with 21 cartoonists who are progressive, ass-kicking and funny as hell. The cartoonists include Andy Singer, Clay Butler, Lalo Alcaraz, Tom Tomorrow, Ruben Bolling, Matt Wuerker, Lloyd Dangle, Tim Eagan, Stephanie McMillan, Scott Bateman and yours truly. You can order it from any decent book store for $13.95.

No.

Patsy Takemoto Mink died this year, on September 28, after succumbing to a month-long battle with chickenpox and viral pneumonia. She was 74 years old. She did not live long enough.

American politics have long been home to a great many people driven by greed, an overwhelming desire for power, and a cynicism of the worst kind; the cynicism borne not as a reaction to powerlessness, but rather as a tool to mask the underlying guilt felt by those who abuse what power they are granted. There have been points in American history where, through a combination of a change in the social climate and personal fortitude, coalitions and individuals who stand head and shoulders above the standard political idiom and refuse to abide by its "rules" are given a chance to make a difference. Patsy T. Mink was one of those rare individuals.

Patsy grew up in Hawaii as a Japanese American and bore witness to the devastating effects of war xenophobia during WWII, when many people who shared her ancestry were shipped off to internment camps in a furor of reactionary sentiment, separating them from their livelihoods and cultural achievements. Possessed of a strong will and sense of ethics, she started her career in politics with her election to the student body presidency at her high school in Paia, Maui, in 1944. After graduation, she studied pre-med at the University of Hawaii and the University of Nebraska (where she fought, and won, a battle to desegregate student housing), then applied to mainland medical schools to complete her studies, but was rejected by all due to her gender. She decided to go into law instead and graduated from the University of Chicago. Upon completion, she began to practice law in Hawaii but was not able to get much work— due, once again, to her gender. Patsy quickly realized that unless she worked actively to change things, she would never get anywhere professionally.

"I didn't start off wanting to be in politics," she once told a reporter. "I wanted to be a learned professional, serving the community. But they weren't hiring women just then. Not being able to get a job from anybody changed things."

In an era when the Democratic Party was very different from what it is now, when the "Young Democrats" were beginning a campaign from within to push the party farther into a more genuinely progressive platform than it had had for years, Patsy was elected the first president of the Young Democrats. She continued to run for office after office, being elected to the Territorial House and Senate in 1956 and 1958, respectively (Hawaii was not yet a state then), and setting her eye on a seat in the US Congress.

As the first woman of color to be elected to the US Congress, in 1964, Patsy stood out as a woman and an Asian in the nearly all-white, all-male House of Representatives. Today, our high courts, Congress, and presidential cabinet are sprinkled with women and members of minority groups who are deeply conservative (Sandra Day O'Connor, Clarence Thomas, Colin Powell, Gail Norton, and Condoleeza Rice are just a few examples), appointed by scary old white men to quell complaints about lack of equal representation while guaranteeing continued support for legislation that erodes women's rights, civil rights, social welfare, and peace initiatives. Patsy, on the other hand, was a fierce, charismatic, and determined supporter of civil rights, equal access and opportunity for women, and public education, as well as a strident opponent of the death penalty. She also was one of the earliest and most hardcore opponents of the war in Vietnam, a position she maintained through the entire conflict. It was a position that did not endear her to many of her own constituents, and also grated on the politically influential Hawaii veterans of World War II. During a heated 1968 reelection campaign, her opponents painted her as "a friend of Hanoi" and "Patsy Pink" because of her anti-war voting record. These crude smear tactics had no effect—she continued to win every election quite handily. In 1972, she accompanied fellow Rep. Bella Abzug of New York to Paris to talk to participants in the Vietnam War peace talks, which served to further antagonize the military-industrial complex who would surely have loved to have sent her on a long walk off of a short pier. Despite criticism, Patsy held to what she believed was right. "I don't think that weighing the mail is the answer," she once explained.

Patsy was an effective politician, one who would play the game to the best of her ability and see her cause through no matter how long or how much work it took. She also happened to be on the good side and was driven by an unerring sense of social justice, and for this we are all very lucky. In 1972, she made a bid for the Democratic presidential nomination in Oregon. It appeared to be a quixotic bid for attention, but it was hardly that.

Patsy and other anti-war Democrats had become concerned that leading Democratic contender George McGovern had lost his focus on opposition to the Vietnam War as the possibility of his nomination became more and more real.

The Oregon presidential bid was an effort to get the party and the candidates back on the anti-war message. Even as a critic of the war, Patsy found she could count on strong support from organized labor, and from the $5 and $10 backers upon whom she had always relied. Despite her 2 percent showing in that primary, she always felt that the effort did return the anti-war movement to the forefront of the Democratic nomination process.

In the late 1970s and 1980s, following an unsuccessful bid for the Senate and a appointment in President Jimmy Carter's cabinet as assistant Secretary of State for oceans and international, environmental, and scientific affairs (ending with her resignation in protest of Carter's lack of support for the Equal Rights Amendment for Women, also known as the ERA) Patsy went back to Hawaii and involved herself in local politics for several years, including a stint as the president of the super-progressive group Americans For Democratic Action. She returned to her old seat in congress in 1990.

But the Capitol she returned to was a far different place than it had been in the 1970s when she was able to pass such landmark legislation as Title IX, which guaranteed equal access to funding for women's sports in public schools. Old liberal friends such as Abzug were long gone, many of them replaced by a new breed of centrist Democrat less friendly to labor and expansive social programs, and more inclined towards militarism and "traditional" (i.e., Fundamentalist Christian) values. When Republicans took over the House in 1994, Patsy found herself marginalized, and still unwilling to compromise, found also that much of her legislation languished. This, did not dissuade her, however, and she remained as idealistic and outspoken as ever while maintaining enough political savvy to make sure her voice was heard, and often heeded. Most recently she was publicly skeptical of the government's response to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, issuing strong statements against the so-called "USA Patriot Act":

"[It] does not include adequate safeguards to prevent the government from monitoring the communications of innocent people. Citizens may be monitored simply by using a pay phone frequented by terrorists. People may have the shadow of suspicion cast over them by calling a suspected terrorist. Guilt by association will take us back to the dark days of the baseless inflammatory accusations made by the House Un-American Activities Committee.

"Under [the Patriot Act], the government will define 'federal terrorism offense' as the intent to influence or affect the conduct of government by intimidation or coercion, or to retaliate against government conduct. This unclear definition may include groups such as Greenpeace along with the terrorists."

Patsy raised concerns about the potential loss of civil liberties and the creation of a new Department of Homeland Security. And she was one of only 11 members of the House who refused to vote for a resolution condemning terrorist attacks on Israel, because she said the measure would have cut off diplomatic channels with the Palestinians and increased the chances of an all-out war.

Patsy was a passionate Democrat, but she was anything but a quiet loyalist within the party. In fact, she operated as an outsider, loyal to her own agenda but not to that of people who sought to maintain political control above all else. She was private and somewhat aloof—her Republican and centrist Democrat opponents would say gruff, especially when she rose up beyond her tiny frame and poked them in the chest, saying "You can't *dooo* that!"—and made it clear that she was never terribly concerned about what people thought of her, personally or politically, though anyone who knew her knew how sweet and funny she really was. On several occasions "and at least once successfully," party insiders tried to keep Patsy off the official Hawaii delegation to a national nominating convention. She listened to her own convictions, not to the dictates of party leaders.

The political scene is much different today. In an era where a key strategist for the Democratic Party was quoted as saying, "This populist thing just isn't resonating with the people" (with regard to Al Gore, hardly a populist) old-school super-progressive congressional holdouts such as Patsy Mink, Barbara Lee, Maxine Waters, and George Miller are true anomalies, sorely needed in our time. The sad fact is that it is nearly impossible to elect anyone new of their moral fortitude in our corporate-media dominated age. The streamlining of the democratic process to almost exclusively favor centrism (a.k.a. spinelessness) and the right wing has now necessitated that individuals and communities who wish to be catalysts for change come at the system as outsiders and battle their way, through whatever means necessary, to change things—like Patsy did, as an outsider. She had unswerving faith in the electoral process as a potential catalyst for dynamic individuals and groups to do good. Though I feel—as do many others in the country—that much of our current electoral process as it stands has become corrupted to an almost irreparable degree, strong ideals will eventually find a way to be heard, and outsiders with a strong sense of social justice will always be able to find inspiration in folks like Patsy who gladly fought an uphill battle their entire lives to make things better.

Patsy Takemoto Mink possessed one of those rare and beautiful things, a powerful voice of dissent. I have said she did not live long enough because though she did a hell of a lot, it's nearly certain that she did not consider her job done. She was also my aunt, who I loved, and have always looked up to. Rest in peace.

—Johnny Mink, PO Box 3026, Oakland, CA 94609. johngeek@hotmail.com

[some specifics from various media sources, including the *Honolulu Advertiser,* whose deeply conservative publishers have been cowering from Patsy's attacks over the last four decades]

[Mykel wrote this column before we announced the Iraqi War issue, so his column is not about that. Mykel also wants us to tell you that he is against the war, but even more against people who say "Saddam is evil, but we need a UN mandate to kill him." If the UN had any balls, he says, they'd have a mandate to kill a very different leader.]

I will neither yield to the song of the siren nor the voice of the hyena, the tears of the crocodile nor the howling of the wolf. —George Chapman

It was more familiar than the smell of tuna to a lesbian. The old argument, ringing out like the Chili's *I want my baby back, baby back, baby back ribs* commercial. You can't get it out of your head.

I'm in the Lone Star cafe with Sara. I've got a pile of lettuce in front of me. On the lettuce are a few slices of tomato, and a scoop of grey goop, generously called *tuna salad.* On Sara's plate is the same thing, without the scoop.

"How can you eat that?" she asks, shaking her head. "That was a living breathing creature. And now you're eating it? Are you a cannibal?"

"A cannibal eats the same species," I tell her, gradually losing my appetite. "Black widows are cannibals. They eat other

black widows. Amazon Indians are cannibals. They eat other humans. Tuna and I are different species."

"You're being specist," she says. (I shit you not, she actually uses the word *specist.*) "One species is not better than another. We are all equal."

"That's ridiculous," I tell her. "Species are not equal. Some eat. Some get eaten. Some do both. Are lions specist because they eat antelopes?"

She makes a grimace, like I'd just let off an extremely loud fart.

"Lions can't help it," she says. "They have no choice. Humans have a choice. We can choose not to eat others."

"Are you saying humans are better than other animals?" I ask.

"Nope, not better," she answers, "just different. Part of our difference is that we can choose not to eat other living beings. We can choose not to discriminate against other species."

By now I've completely lost my appetite. I pick at the lettuce, then throw my fork down in disgust.

"Let's get out of here," I say.

"Wait!" she says, "I haven't finished my salad."

Sara and I part company. I get a peck on the cheek and a shake of the head for my efforts. I need a drink—and some Buffalo wings. It's off to Bar Nomiso to find that reality that lies in the bottom of every glass of Brooklyn Lager.

A few people sit at a round table near the jukebox. An urban cowboy, tall, thin and ridiculous in his ten-gallon hat, leans against the central pillar, smoking a brown cigarette. As usual, fat bald Joe stands behind the bar. He waves to me as I enter. By the time I'm sitting, my Brooklyn Lager is poured and waiting.

"What's wrong tonight, Mykel?" he asks. "More nookie problems?"

"Not exactly," I tell him. "This one's weird. It's about animals."

"I know what you mean," he says with a grim nod. "New Yorkers are really awful sometimes, aren't they?"

"I'm talking about *real* animals," I say. "You know the kind with fins or trunks or six legs. The kind that bark or meow or bellow. The kind that gallop, scurry, or trot. That's the animals I'm talking about."

"What about them?" he asks. "Don't tell me it's another vegetarian problem? You've beaten that horse... er... excuse the metaphor."

"It's not exactly vegetarianism," I tell him. "It's a bigger issue. It's equality. I mean I believe in equality. I'm all for equal rights. Equal pay. Equal nookie... but that's people. I can't believe there's equality among species. I am not equal to a Cocker Spaniel."

"Looks like you need a trip to the men'sroom," says Joe. "Drink up. There'll be another beer waiting for you when you get back."

I finish my Brooklyn and head for the men'sroom. A young man stands at a urinal, looking down, carefully guiding his evacuation. He doesn't notice me as I approach the urinal next to him, step to the side and then through the wall. He is not on the other side.

Except that, everything looks the same. Then I hear it. A strange sloshing sound, as if a someone were slowly rocking a giant jar of water. I look toward where the sound is coming from. It's one of the toilet stalls. One that's different from the others. The walls go all the way up to the ceiling. Its door is sealed to a large pipe, like a sewer pipe. The other end of the pipe disappears upwards. From inside comes the unmistakable sound of water.

Without further investigation, I leave the men's room and head back to the bar. As expected, there are animals everywhere. A horse in the corner laps at a trough of with the words ROLLING ROCK painted on the side. A few sheep lay on a bed of straw in the middle of the room. A fox lounges near the pillar where the cowboy stood just a few minutes earlier.

There are all kinds of animals here... except for dogs and cats. Maybe they have their own bar.

On the bar itself, a mother hen feeds her brood from what looks like a plate of fried mozzarella.

I walk over to Joe who smiles as if he were waiting for me.

"Not much different from what I expected," I tell him.

Then I motion to the hen. "What's with the chicks?" I ask.

There is silence. All eyes are on me. Already I faux pas-ed!

"Don't call 'em chicks!" whispers Joe. "They hate when you call 'em chicks."

"Sorry," I say, holding both hands up in what I hope is still the gesture of apology. "I didn't mean anything by it."

I sit on a stool. Joe pours me another Brooklyn.

"You need to be careful," he tells me. "Things are different here."

I nod.

"You want something to eat?" he asks.

"Sure," I tell him. "Watcha got?"

"The usual bar food," he replies.

"Ok... I'll have some wings...." again, silence falls and I feel the blood dripping from my face where a hundred angry stares have drilled a hundred holes. The hen next to me stops feeding her young and turns, glaring a horrific *I'll peck your eyes out* glare.

"Mozzarella sticks," I say. "I'll have some soy mozzarella sticks."

"Now you're getting it," says Joe.

Slowly the other bar occupants return to what they were doing before.

"It's gonna take me a while to figure stuff out," I tell him. "Like that toilet stall. What's with the water in the toilet stall?"

"It's the law," says Joe. "We've got to have at least one stall that's *accessible.*"

"Accessible?" I ask. "To who?"

"You're being self-centered," he tells me. "More living forms breathe water than breathe air. We have to watch out for their needs too."

"You mean fish?" I ask.

Joe nods.

"More than just fish," he says. "There are shrimp, sharks, porpoises. They gotta shit too, you know."

"Look Joe," I say, "can you help me out? I need to find out how this place works. What makes it tick, baaaa, moo. I also want to get laid..." I look at the chicken, "er... have sex. I'm not really into fowl, though. Feather allergy."

He laughs and writes on a small pad of paper next to the OLD CROWBAR whisky.

Ripping off the sheet, he hands it to me.

"There's a party on University Place," he says. "Weinstein hall, Room 212. There'll be a lot of college kids. They'll let you know what's up... and they'll be young and attractive."

I express my taste in facially hairless youngsters. "No goatees, I hope."

"Shhhh!" He says, "be careful of what you say. We don't call them that here. It's species stereotyping. We call them *painter's beards.* Forget goatees! Forget the old way of thinking. I'm warning you, if you don't you'll get into trouble."

I thank him and head out the door. The street smells like a zoo. It also looks like a zoo, with every kind of animal wandering freely up and down the sidewalk. They're all well-behaved. They keep to the sidewalk, cross the street at the corner, wait for green lights. Not at all like other New Yorkers.

I head across town toward University Place. I know I'm getting close when I see a newspaper box with *The Washington Square News* in it. That's the student paper at NYU.

I pick up a copy.

PROFESSOR FIRED FOR SPECIST REMARK is the headline.

As I walk, I read.

Professor Michael R. Maus was expelled yesterday in what might be the "free speech vs living rights" case of the year. The firing came after several days of protests.

Students were protesting the Professor's remark at a meeting of the International Policy Forum, held in the Dumbo Building on the Washington Square Campus.

The professor said that President Bush's failure to explain his contributions from Enron was "weaseling out of taking responsibility."

The professor later explained that his remarks had nothing to do with the ANIMAL weasel, but were used in a different meaning. "To back out of a situation or commitment in a sneaky or cowardly manner, from the Middle English word 'wesele.'"

Akron Amery, the student president of S.U.C.S (Students United to Combat Specism), said that motive is not the problem. The problem is the suffering caused to a significant minority group.

"Weasels have had a difficult time," he said. "There is no reason on earth to make their lives even more difficult."

At first, the university defended the professor. "We support unequivocally the right of academic freedom," said President Flipper Hypocras, the university president.

When it became clear that several students paying full-tuition would leave, the university backed away from its original stance.

"We understand and feel the pain..."

Here I am: Weinstein Hall. I put the paper down on the entrance desk. Behind the desk sits a chubby guy with a beard. Also sitting behind the desk is a platypus.

"I'm here to go to the party in room 212."

"I'll need to see some ID," says the fat man. The platypus, naturally enough, says nothing.

After showing my driver's license, I'm allowed to enter and take the elevator to the second floor.

I immediately hear the party. Blasting music and loud voices from down the hall. The door is open. It's a rather large dorm room, cinderblock walls, and posters of heavy metal bands on the walls. On one of the posters, written in blazing letters, is the name DEF LEOTARD.

It's hard to tell exactly what kind of party it is. The music is a mix of 60s, 70s, and 80s stuff. As I enter, Eric Burdon is singing "We Gotta Get Out of This Place." College-age kids are dressed like college kids. Jeans, t-shirts with slogans. Dumb-looking people in Nikes. Cool ones wearing Converse. No one wears leather. The hardwood floor is carpetless. Scattered on it are small black pellets.

A keg sits in the middle of the floor in the next room. I walk towards it.

Suddenly, something pushes me. Hard. I nearly lose my balance.

"WATCH IT!" says a big colored guy. I turn to the guy with a *don't-you-know-who-you're-fucking-with* look on my face.

He points at the floor. A few steps ahead and to the right I see a small grey piece of fur. It takes a few seconds to realize it's a rabbit.

"You almost stepped on Rastus."

"I'm sorry," I tell him. "This seems like a dangerous place for a rabbit, don't you think?"

He looks at me as if I'd called him a bad name. Offended. Angry.

"What's the matter?" he asks. "Don't like rabbits? Think they're too sexy? Gonna steal your women?"

"I'm sorry," I say. "I didn't mean anything."

"Your kind never does," he says walking off, shaking his head.

The white guy next to me, wearing a t-shirt with a full-chest American flag on it, leans his head next to mine and whispers.

"That was the host. He's a show-liberal. He always invites a party-rabbit. Just showing off. On the street, he wouldn't give 'em the time of day."

I nod as if I knew what he was talking about. Then, I tread carefully toward the beer keg, looking for other little creatures. There are none.

A young Oriental woman sits by herself in the corner, under a window. She sits with her butt at the edge of the chair. Her upper body leans back. Her head tilts, slightly drooped. She breathes like she'd just finished a marathon, gulping air. Sweat makes her SLUGS ARE PEOPLE TOO t-shirt stick in all the right places. Watching her breasts rise and fall, I get up the nerve to approach her.

"Hi," I say causally.

She looks at me looking at her breasts. Then she smiles. I move closer.

"Hot night," I say.

She nods.

"It could get hotter," she says.

Whoa! OK, I'd better keep up the conversation or I'll lose her.

"I'm not from around here," I tell her. "Could you tell me something?"

"Sure," she says, straightening up in her seat. I feel myself straightening up in a different respect.

"I was wondering... I see all kinds of animals around the city. But no dogs and cats. Could you tell me why?"

Her smile fades like I flipped a switch. The muscles of her face bulge in the bulge that happens when people clench their teeth.

"Fuck off!" she says, standing up and walking away.

I leave the party. Sensory overload and underload. I don't get it.

I need to walk. To figure things out. There's something I'm on the verge of discovering. Some truth I can bring back to *my* universe. I'm just missing a few parts. I need to put some final pieces together. I know I'll understand more when I have a chance to think about it.

I cross the street to avoid an unfriendly-looking moose blocking the sidewalk ahead. I realize where I'm headed.

It's back to Bar Nomisu. Joe stands behind the bar, cleaning glasses. On the stool in front of him, a chimp holds a mug of Corona. A lime floats in it, like an errant turd in a cesspool.

"Do all chimps have such bad taste in beer?" I ask, taking a seat next to the animal.

"Mykel!" says Joe. "You going back already?"

"Not quite yet," I say. "I sure don't want to live here, but there are a few things I have to figure out first."

I lean forward to make it obvious I want to speak to the man in private. He leans his bald head toward me. I whisper in his ear.

"What's with the dogs and cats? Where are they?" I ask.

Joe laughs, a big hearty belly-shaking laugh.

"Did you have a run in with some radical? Some free-the-oppressed person?"

"I don't know," I answer. "I only know the question upset someone."

"It's the radicals," he says. "They think it's unfair."

I lower my eyebrows, a signal that I don't get it.

"They're in jail," he says. "The dogs and cats are in jail."

"For what?" I ask.

"The dogs are in for public urination," he tells me.

"That doesn't sound like a serious crime," I say.

"But they're repeat offenders," he continues. "Unrepentant. As soon as you let 'em out... Bang! They do it again. The mayor said, 'No More!' So now they're locked up."

"And the cats?" I ask.

"That's more grave," answers Joe. "They're in for Kitty Porn. Awful stuff, some as young as three weeks."

Then it hits me. That last part of the puzzle: If animals are "equal" to humans, they have to be bound by human laws. If they have the benefits of humanity, they have to pay our penal-

ties. Passports. PC-ism. Puritanism. Traffic signals. Everything blithely ignored by non-humans in my world, bind them in this one. Species equality would mean a step down, a loss of freedom for animals. Who would want that?

The animal rightists have it all wrong. It's people who need liberating, not animals. Sure animals get eaten. Sometimes they're raised in sub-par conditions, but it's worse for people. We're *all* raised in sub-par conditions. We're *all* bound by unreasoning totalitarians, spirit-deadening laws, unyielding speech police. We're *all* forced to do what no animal in its right mind would do. Better to be someone's dinner than have a lifetime of servitude and obedience to stupidity.

"Thanks Joe." I tell him. "I knew I could count on you."

I return to the men's room. From the watertank toilet, I hear a savage banging. As if something were violently hitting the partition, trying to escape. I figure I'd better hurry before something happens. I walk to the wall behind the urinals and pass through it. Home!

Back in the bar, Joe waits, as promised, with a fresh Brooklyn Lager.

"How'd it go, Mykel?" he asks.

"I get it now," I tell him. "You still got some Buffalo Wings?

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) will receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*]

—>*That California look dept:* A new drug called "Malanotan" is being tested. It's original goal was "tanning from the inside." You take the pill. Your skin turns brown. During clinical trials the men told (but didn't complain) about side effects: instant hard-on. Better than Viagra.

Not only does it make you hard, unlike Viagra, it makes you want to *use* that hardness. It increases desire. Sounds like a slip-it-in-the-Corona drug to me.

—>*A nice new suit dept:* It's fashionable to make fun of "frivolous" lawsuits. Not that there are so many. In fact, the one I hear most about is over ten years old. A woman who sued McDonalds because the coffee they served was hot enough to scald 20% of her body. Somehow, people say, it's bad to sue over spilt coffee.

I *like* lawsuits, especially against big corporations who deserve to pay for their eviltude. Kesha sent me a report about a 272 pound man who sued four fastfood chains claiming they "contributed to his obesity, heart disease and diabetes."

What does he want? Money isn't the main thing, though he's gotta pay the lawyers. The main thing is labeling. He wants the Grease-oids to reveal the grease. How much salt? How much fat? How much cow dung? A pretty reasonable request if you ask me. More info at: http://www.msnbc.com/news/786102.asp

—>*Time to cry dept:* They did it. The month before the WTC attack. As if to portend the loss of liberty to follow.

The last sex shop on 42nd Street went out of business. Evil landlords evicted Peep-O-Rama from its space between 6th Avenue and Broadway. The closure of the 24-hour peep show is the final nail in the Times Square coffin. Once a fine area of prostitutes and sex shops, it's now an awful land of Disney and Toys R Us. Time to get out, I say.

ENEMY

Fuck Yes!! This month you skins and punks are getting treated to a really good EP from Erie, Pennsylvania's THROWBACKS. The new Dim Records EP starts with the band's theme song,

"Throwbacks," with good gruff singing and strong guitar playing. "Everyday" celebrates the skinhead lifestyle. Flip the EP over and you get "PSA" and then a rock-hard song, "Enemy." Take a good look at these lyrics: "You grow up, you live your life, you grow old and you learn/ You go to school, you get a job, still in your habit you burn/ You long to be just like the folks who live next door to you/ But deep inside you know that's something you could never do/ You're an outcast, a freak, a loser, and a geek/ Hear the words they scream at you, that is what they think/ Misfit, weirdo, total fuckin' star/ They will smile when you are gone and they alone remain/ So stand up and shout with me/ You're my fuckin' enemy, you never will be rid of me / I wish you would just die tonight/ Out of my world, out of my sight/ I never will like your kind/ Your trendy ways, your too small mind/ You know I hate everything you do/ Just disappear man, fuck you/ Outcast, weirdo, misfit, freak/ I wear these names like a prize no matter what you think/ This is my world, not yours, so go the fuck away/ I'll live my life the way I do no matter what you say/ I've grown up, I've lived my life, I've grown old and learned/ Be yourself, don't sell your soul and you will never burn/ Don't long to be just like the folks who live next door to you/ Because deep inside you know that is something you can never do." Yes!!! This is damn good skinhead music with tough shouted vocals and rocking guitars and drums. These Keystone State Skins mean business! For the THROWBACKS EP write Dim Records, c/o U. Grosman/ Postfach 11 D 96237, Ebensdorf, Germany, www.dimrecords.de.

TOMMY AND THE TERRORS from Boston Massachusetts have a great EP available for you on TKO Records. The seven inch EP is called "On the Run," and features the title cut, "On the Avenue," and "Outbound." Good shit! Write to TOMMY AND THE TERRORS at 247 Farrington St. Apt. 2, Quincy, Massachusetts 02170; email: bostonmassholes@yahoo.com. Write TKO Records at 3126 W. Cary St., Richmond, Virginia 23221.

TKO also has prepared a full length LP by Lawrence, Kansas's badmen, COCKNOOSE. The compilation of seven inches and unreleased stuff by this band of outlaws is introduced by none other than Jeffrey "Negative Force" Skipski, who put out some early COCKNOOSE material on his infamous Baloney Shrapnel Records, and issued the first COCKNOOSE CD. On this LP you get great songs like "Death Noose," "Alcohol Burnin' Man," "Punk Rock Outlaws," "Fuck You Die," "Livin' On the Run," "The Way It Is," "All American Boys," "Treasure Chest" and "Kicked in the Teeth," among other hits. You Confederacy of Scum fans already know about the brute power of COCKNOOSE—The rest of you rock and rollers better start paying attention!!! Contact the men in COCKNOOSE at P.O. Box 442442, Lawrence, Kansas, United States of America.

Berlin, Germany's The SHOCKS have a punk-as-fuck LP available for you on Dirty Faces/Attack Records. The SHOCKS caught the ear of the punk public with their 1996 Attack EP called, *Too Many Kicks in '96* and the follow up *Holiday on Zyklon Bay* in 1999. The SHOCKS' LP, *More Cuts for You in Zero 2* has 14 short, punk, fast, '77 style numbers for you . Write to Dirty Faces Records, c/o Volker Jaedicke, Universitaesst Str. 16, 44789 Bochum, Germany; www.dirtyfaces.de.

POBEL & GESOCKS, those veteran German skinheads, have a new CD for you on Oi! Hammer Records. The new CD is called *Lieder Uber Leben Und Tod.* This band has played consistently good street music for many years and they have a devoted following worldwide. POBEL & GESOCKS kick a lot of skinhead ass on "Kussen Wosnicht Schmeckt," "Wilde Jahre," and "Inde Offen". POBEL & GESOCKS always gives you melodic Oi! with gruff vocals and good choruses. The band will have you swilling a pint and strutting around the bar in no time! Write to Oi! Hammer Records, Postfach 2303, 59013 Hamm; www.oi-hammer.de.

The seasoned German skinhead band VOLXSTURM has a

called "Bi Uns To Hus.." and this fucker continues a street rock n' roll tradition that VOLXSTURM started in 1991. Top notch guitar work along with polished singing styles push this skinhead release to the forefront of current street releases. Some of the standout tracks on this solid CD release are "Heimat," "Viel Zu Spat," "Lang Ist Es Her," "Geht Vorbei," "Wie Lange Noch?" (very good!), "Raff Dich Auf," and "Alltag." This is very good shit! VOLXSTURM manages to couple the melodies of Oi! with the raw urgency of streetpunk. This is one of the most underrated top quality skinhead bands in the world. Give this a listen!

A band that has straddled the Oi! and punk world for many years, is England's THE BUSINESS. This month DSS gives you *A Tribute to The Business—Hardcore Hooligans.* This is packed with good BUSINESS songs preformed by a whole whack of talented bands from all points on the international streetpunk compass. Read the stunning roster of bands carrying on the musical torch of THE BUSINESS: SPECIAL DUTIES, DISCIPLINE, THE FORGOTTEN, FUNERAL DRESS, WARRIORS, GUNDOG, DEADLINE, HEADCASE, UNITE AGAINST SOCIETY, N.Y. REL-X, HIPPY WAR GENERAL, SOUTHPOW MANNERS, EMSCHERKURVE 77, SISTER MARY ROTTEN CROTCH, ARGY BARGY, and STOMPER 98.

ANTIDOTE from The Netherlands have two great picture discs available for you. The LP *My Life* from 1998 fucking rocks! Also, look for the *Let's Get Drunk* EP in fine picture disc format. Contact ANTIDOTE at antidote@freemail.nl or Groenewegje 157, 2515 NC Den Haag, The Netherlands. The "My Life" picture disc is available through Dirty Faces Records.

A good punk-rock CDR came down this way- STRAITJACKET from Portland, Oregon. These punks have been kicking around for about four years and they have developed into a damn decent punk outfit.. The new material includes "Anti-Me," "The Other Side," "Waiting," "Falling Down," and "Lost." This is good punk rock with attitude that falls somewhere between the STITCHES and the WORKIN' STIFFS. For information and other STRAITJACKET releases contact STRAITJACKET at www.straitjacket.net, or write to these punks at 2923 SE 17th, Portland, Oregon. 97202.

Bill McConnell from Belfast, Ireland sent in two issues of his fine photo-copied zine *Riot on Your Own.* This has great live reviews of shows, record and CD reviews, pictures and interviews. Included, with lots of others, are SKINT, TIGER ARMY, RUNNIN' RIOT, THE UNSEEN, DROPKICK MURPHYS, THE EXPLOITED, and MENACE. Look for a review of a Belfast-based punk compilation CD next month in this column. Write to Bill McConnell for your copy of *Riot on Your Own,* at 5 Glen Rd., Belfast, BT57JH, Ireland; email billy.mcconnell@5x3.com

Until next month—See you fucks at the bar!!!

Lovesick, I can't kick it
I came in on a one-way ticket
I can't zip it, my brain's dead
Going 90 with a bridge out ahead
Watch out girl, you're gonna love me to death.
—Dead Moon

And it is so gorgeously fucked up, the way my face looks at 5 am, ripped and mussed up. I'm trying to remember what I was trying to tell you, and I look over and you are bent over my bed snoring from driving half-drunk for three days in the wilderness. I love the desperate way we buy into the destruction. I hear the Ramones on the college radio station when I'm driving the work truck with the broken tape player, and hell yeah, I sing along and glorify the destruction of youth; yeah, I'm a teenage lobotomy.

But we didn't die at 21. How are we gonna grow old together? Maybe give up the booze but not our autonomy? Wear earplugs, but still make music? But these are patch fixes of the symptoms, not the disease. Because we don't know how to talk to each other; we know how to grab but not how to listen to each other's bodies, know how to listen to the bodies but not the people. And our communities are custom-built to evaporate. It takes so much work to hold them together.

I started this column a week ago, probably a day before I was laid off from my gardening job. I spent every day last week listening to NPR's all-day coverage of the congressional hearings about unilateral action in Iraq. I pulled weeds and pruned shrubs while old white senators asked each other questions. I felt oddly emotionally numb awaiting the coming war. Man, I'm only 25. During the course of my life I have been bombarded with constant small losses: malls being built all over the desert, public education going to shit, welfare being erased, zoning for housing being altered to fit the needs of businesses that sell nothing we need anyhow. A transformation of our world into something that looks less and less like somewhere I want to be. But the beginning of the second Bush administration has pushed all of this to extremes.

Part of what has sustained me is seeing the passion and creativity alive in my community; it's the way we take care of each other. But I have been so confused by the absence of powerful resistance in the Bay Area to the Amerikan government's response to September 11. Mostly because I feel so numb and even apathetic, like I'm riding the confusion. I go to a march and it's really a rally full of Maoists calling for a leader to rise up. People who want to sell me preprinted signs to hold while I stand still in a park. It makes me feel more complacent than anything.

So it was incredibly inspirational to have a couple of my friends organize a protest over the course of just a week, a fucking passionate resistance that transformed the streets from being congested with cars to overrun with screaming punx in smelly costumes. We took over Mission Street; I was a caffeinated majorette surrounded by a bunch of furry animals, one masked kid wore a suit and carried a sign that said, "Terrorists Against War." The cops didn't show up for what seemed like an hour. Kids passed out tons of bilingual information to folks on the street. We'd attached a open U-Haul trailer that was rented for thirty bucks to the back of a pickup truck, we used it as a stage for live bands. There were banners that read "No Cowboys in Iraq" and streamers and dancing girls in the truck itself. Three bands played, including some of the kids who started putting on generator shows in San Francisco in the mid-90s, before I was here. And it felt like we were all alive together. The night dragged on in messy glamour, inspirational idealism; a conviction that we are in fact so much more powerful than we give ourselves credit for. Because so much of resistance is believing that you can do what you want. So many of us have been programmed to believe that we are weak, that we cannot build our world to look the way we want it to.

It was after 3 am when I stumbled home, still dressed like some fucked-up form of a cheerleader, escorted by two friends that were happy to go out of their way to make sure I got home safe. I didn't check the answering machine; there were three hysterical messages from one of my best friends, he'd left them in 15 minute intervals from 2 am on. When I woke up the next morning my housemate let me know that this kid we knew had OD'd at something like midnight.

That news yesterday morning began a series of phone calls and lone walks through unseasonable heat of the Mission, to find my friends who'd known and loved Matty Luv for years. I'd spent the past week contemplating the glamorization of our self-destruction, and one of our local punk rock anti-heroes had disappeared. Matty Luv was the guitarist and singer of Hickey and a member of many other local bands. Along with three other members of this community, he helped start the SF needle exchange, accepting arrest and saving tons of lives.

After I couldn't find anyone at home, I went to Mission Records, our only all-ages space out here in the gloryhole of punk rock, to immerse myself in my community. This was not my tragedy, he was not my old friend or bandmate. Yeah, it was a loss, because damn sure I knew the man was brilliant and suffered because of it. But I came to be around those I love when they were grieving. Because that is why we have each other.

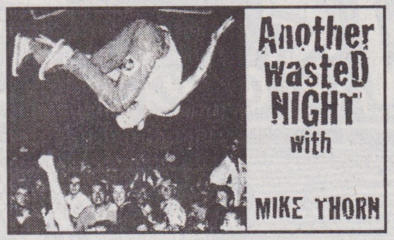
I watched 20-year-old kids grieving for a man they'd seen play shows since they were 13, in sharpie-d Hickey shirts that they'd made for the occasion, sobbing into each other. Older rockers who never come out anymore telling each other stories and putting up photos on the altar by the doorway. And countless others who were devastated by his death. This has to be what we are trying to build out here is this damaged town, so far away from where many of us were born. In this weird isolated world where we discuss random all-girl Swedish bands from the 70s, public diaries that suburban teenagers mail all over the world, groupies that were secret artists themselves, as some sort of secret internal dialogue shared by people who sometimes seem more like members of a cult than a community. But when the shit comes down, what we are really creating is a space where people bring food for everyone, where we take turns holding the grieving,

where there is always room on the couch for you to crash on.

As I went to grab my hoodie from behind the counter, I saw my hickey-covered neck in the mirror. The night before, right around the time Matty died, me and a bunch of my beersoaked friends decided to cover each other's necks with hickeys. We weren't making out; we were marking each other with those juvenile badges of sexuality as some sort of hard-to-retell joke. As my friend Jimmy said after seeing all of us looking like the day after an overdone Spin The Bottle, "We are in tune with each other, we just need to learn how to sharpen our perception."

Dying don't scare me, just promise me that there won't be any squares at my funeral.

—Hickey



Is this all in vain? In case you are denser than an anvil, this issue is dedicated to resistance to militarism, and more specifically, to Mr. Bush's obsessive drive towards war against Iraq. Collected in these pages are arguments against said action, tales of the protests that have already happened, history lessons, and information about ways to get involved. But let me restate my question: Is all of this in vain? At this point, it seems like this drive towards increased hostilities against Iraq is completely inevitable. I say increased, because let's be honest—the USA has been in a state of low-level warfare with Iraq since the Gulf War (supposedly) ended. It has maintained of the no-fly zone, regularly bombarded sites throughout Iraq, and enforced sanctions which have lead to the deaths of hundreds of thousands Iraqis. So, one might ask, what's the point in all this?

While we may not be able stop this drive towards full-blown war—on Iraq or on "terrorism"—I feel it is the responsibility of those who dispute said actions to let their opposition be known. It is important to make it as uncomfortable as possible for those in power to act solely for the benefit of the wealthy elite—in this specific case, for oil interests. I applaud those who stormed the UN to show their contempt, those who attempted to block the entrances to the Federal building here in San Francisco and the tens of thousands who have taken to the streets in New York, DC, London, and throughout the world, to let the Blairs, the Bushes, and their ilk know that perhaps they are in fact full of shit—and a large percentage of us know it. My biggest hope is that others will see these actions and begin to question their own resolve of support for Mr. Bush's wars.

But it shouldn't just be about this war, but about all wars—and about the rampant militarism that has infected the USA and the world. I don't have time or space to go into the details of the post-WWII military industrial complex which has, since the 1950s, dominated not only the American economy, but its culture as well. I will say this—it annoys me that the progressive/activist/left/ whatever community seemingly sits around and waits to organize mass protests only when there is the possibility of war. Instead, we should be attempting to protest on the same sort of mass level the ugly side of militarism on a near-constant basis—even without the looming threat of war. There should be a more concentrated push against the arms sales industry—its creation of small scale arms races in third world nations, how it perpetuates small scale wars throughout the world, and the way that this excessive defense spending creates dependence on the arms industry for the nation's economic well being. There needs to be more pressure applied to our elected officials, who are seemingly more inclined towards the perpetuation of said system of dependency. The least that could be done would be to make the social welfare safety net spending more equitable to that which is spent in preparations for war. I'd rather have my tax dollars going towards helping someone to live than preparing for someone's death.

I'm a cynical person. Sometimes going to marches and protests feels like I'm just beating my head against a wall. It feels pointless, but I keep going, despite not really knowing why at times. In my frustration it feels like the only thing I can do. In this issue you will read about the march here in San Francisco, which I felt was one of the more inspiring and effectual events to happen in some time—it is moments like that which give me hope that maybe something might change. I often feel the same frustration Mark Andersen voices in his article in this issue—I was born and bred in middle America, where the idea of America as a shining beacon of democracy, justice, and liberty was beaten into my brain. And while I in no way believe that is the true nature of this country, there is a part of me that feels that the promise of that ideal is still possible. While it may be nothing more than the echoes of liberalism instilled in me (that makes me retch, when I see it in others), the disappointment of the failed fulfillment of that promise is still an ingrained struggle within me. Despite my overwhelming cynicism, and well founded belief that those in power only serve a Machiavellian purpose—part of me still believes a better world is possible. And I still believe that those around me are going to be part of its creation.

Endnotes:

1) Keep in mind while reading this that I feel the same way in regards to Mr. Hussein as I do towards Mr. Bush. I feel too often the left/progressive world makes too many excuses for Hussein and sometimes plays right into the hands of the war-mongering hawks on the right. The two are one and the same. We'd be better off without either one of them.

2) Mr. Bush's insistence on regime change in Iraq seems at first a frighteningly slippery slope for the world to tread on—especially when it is a policy which is being pushed by the world's only superpower. But in reality, it is nothing new—do some research into the US's involvement in Hawaii, the Philippines, Chile, Guatemala, Iran, etc. Regime change, and the installation of puppets, has been US foreign policy throughout the history of this nation.

3) I highly recommend Howard Zinn's *On War*, Dalton Trumbo's *Johnny Got His Gun*, and Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49*.

4) I also recommend checking out the Federation of American Scientists' website. It contains a mountain of information detailing the arms industry—weapons specifications, details as to exactly what the US has sold to other countries, and news about the arms race. Their website is www.fas.org

5) Finally I recommend listening to LEATHERFACE's *Fill Your Boots* LP, The SUBHUMANS' *From the Cradle, to the Grave* LP, anything by BGK, the new DISCLOSE 12", GUYANA PUNCHLINE's *Irritainment* LP and the ATROCIOUS MADNESS *Total Control* LP.

6) I can be contacted at mikethorn@mindspring.com or via *MRR*.

I won't tell the story about our punk protest here in San Francisco—that's told here, arguably too many times. I also won't tell the story—because it's not mine—of how we woke up from our revelry the next day and found one of our circle dead before his time.

You can't ignore this climate of war, because of your own ordinary demons. Also, though—this lesson is less often repeated—you can't ignore your own pain for long before it erupts, scattering casualties. But what gentleness can we expect from a world in this condition? If not permission to criticize, then at least permission to breathe? How to reconcile ourselves with the privileges of warm beds and hot cups of coffee over which to argue with lovers; of safety? How to develop a relationship with truth, when the heaps of bullshit pile up around us?

I'll never forget this October. They say California has no seasons, but they just don't know how to read them. Dozens of birthdays—mine that felt like four, at once. One punk rocker gone, and another pair cradling a new baby. Friends, moving here and away, giving and taking, enduring trials, drawing together and apart. My own heart heavy with premonitions.

While we are trying to do all of this, the Blue Angels tear through the sky, cracking the sound barrier and disturbing our thoughts. These are the fighter jets they show off every year, above the City and the bay. Their roar—of military might, terrible patronage—is startlingly huge, each time. I hate them, like the anthem, for their grandeur. The first one set my heart beating in panic, but these didn't carry bombs for me. For Baghdad? Where, says my Iraqi-American neighbor at the corner store, gesturing passionately, people drink in bars, talk on the street, take their children to school, fall in love, criticize the government. Also die before their time.

PO Box 170291, SF, CA 94117, arwenc@mindspring.com

EVERY DAY IT'S THE SAME F'IN NEWS...
"MAN, WHAT IS THIS GUY'S DAMAGE!? ARRRGGH!!!.. AAAWWW!!
"WHAT A DING-DONG-DSHIT!!"
R:E
BUSH DECLARES WAR ON THE ENTIRE WORLD!!
GAINESVILLE SUN
TODAY
ORK TIMES
KILL THEM ALL!!
BUSH QUOTED LAST NIGHT AS SAYING, "WELL HELL, IF THEY AIN'T FROM THE US OF A, THEN ... SHOULD DIE!
USA
caroline paquita 10/02

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THEY'VE MOVED 3 CENTIMETERS SINCE YESTERDAY
MORE LIKE 2.5
AS YOU SAY, SADDAM
WWW.RALL.COM
DISTRIBUTED BY UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE
POPPY LET THE BAGHDAD BUTCHER ESCAPE. A DECADE LATER, SONNY'S FINISHING THE JOB...
SURPRISE ATTACK!
10-17-02-c

MAKE NO MISTAKE: WE AMERICANS LOVE PEACE.
SO WHENEVER WE THINK SOMEONE'S ABOUT TO DO SOME-THING VIOLENT, WE ATTACK!
WE GO AFTER THOSE VICIOUS BRUTES AND WE BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF THEM!
WE BITE AND CLAW AND KILL AND STAB AND BOMB AND SHOOT AND GNAW AND CRUSH AND KILL INVADE DIE
GRRRRRR RRRRR RRR
DISTRIBUTED BY UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP
CHOMP
HE'S GOING A BIT OVERBOARD WITH THE HYPOCRITICAL PYSCHO ROUTINE.
YEAH, BUT IT'S DAMNED ENTERTAINING.
TED RALL
10-10-02-B

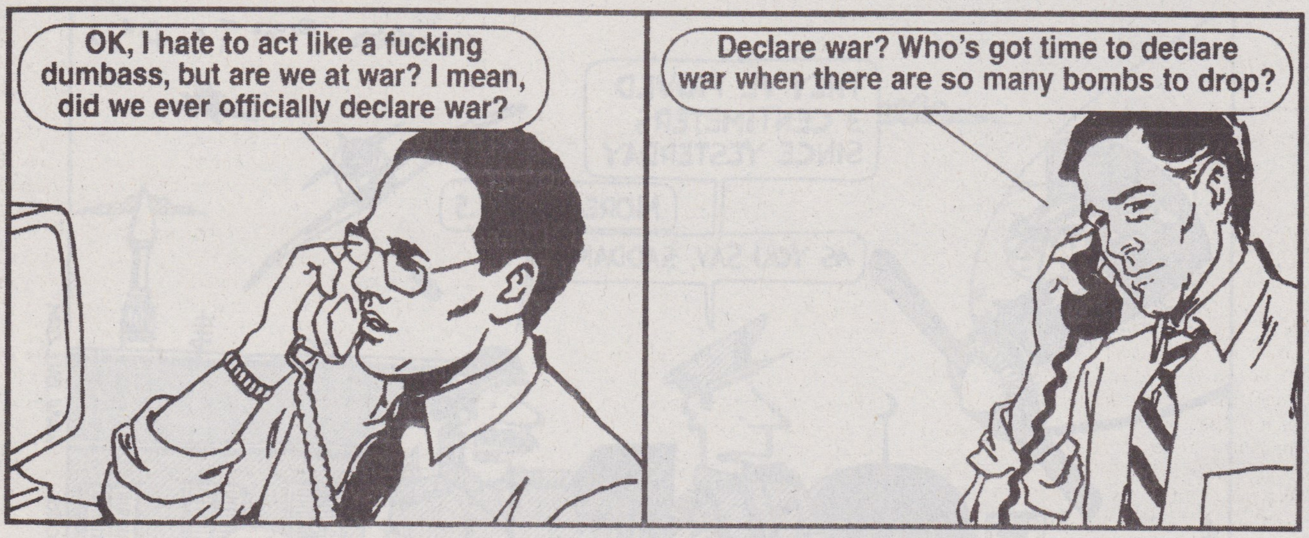

Illustration by David Rees from his book *Get Your War On* available from Soft Skull Press.

Michelle Steinberg

When Arwen first suggested that I contribute to this Anti-War issue, I found myself questioning exactly what I could add. Lately, I have felt disinclined to participate in any of the sparse local actions planned in response to the impending escalation of aggression towards Iraq. Clearly, I oppose this ridiculous continuation of US imperial violence. There is the blatant hypocrisy of the rhetoric on "weapons of mass destruction" (as if the US and its allies should maintain exclusive rights to tools with the capacity to kill on a giant scale) and the often invoked "humanitarian" argument (we must intervene out of misguided "moral" responsibility). Then, of course, there is the fact that our greed for the shiny, black, liquid monster and the power that accompanies controlling that oil dictate our every move in the region. Hussein is clearly a bastard, but that has no bearing whatsoever on the discussion of bombing the hell out of the Iraqi people, just as most in the US would rather not die for the sins of our presidential shrub.

However, with equal vehemence, I reject the false dichotomy of war and peace; that avoiding a heightened military campaign towards Iraq, or any other unfortunate target 'o the month, would constitute peace is absurd. The US has maintained a continuous low-grade attack against Iraq since the "Gulf War" and this country's covert perpetration or support of violence in other nations (take Colombia for instance) will continue with little public awareness or concern. Beyond the confused cries for "peace", is also the question of what constitutes "war". Capitalism, by both obvious and subtle mechanisms, wages war against all—its devout adherents, as well its critics—and everyone in between (though some may gain materially in meantime). As every detail of our lives is infiltrated by capitalism, we maintain little of this "freedom" over which other wars are purported to be fought. To liberate ourselves, as well as the many whose enslavement takes more immediately recognizable forms, something other than "peace" may well be called for.

Then there is the question of tactics. Much recent "anti-war" mobilization has taken the form of either protests or drives to promote legislative change. I'm not going to waste time discussing the uselessness of the later. Mass demonstrations, though, can have some beneficial effects. They provide a setting for people to potentially find others with whom they might share opinions, and possibly coordinate with on projects. They can be a useful setting to disseminate information, to both onlookers and participants. They can also act to politicize people further—serving as a step in a process of growing awareness, acting as an impetus to critical thinking. For some, they can break feelings of isolation or despair, by reflecting that one's opinion may be more common than the corporate media or daily encounters may imply.

Such actions can be equally alienating, though, as they might serve as a reminder that one actually has little affinity with the majority of participants; for example, liberals who oppose war as long as their precious standard of living is unaffected by that choice, or authoritarian communist groups who make heroes of dictators. Not to mention that the manner in which many such actions are organized is often as unempowering as, say, this country's electoral process.

More important is the question of whether these demonstrations reaffirm the current power structure. Surely when the media or politicians (from Republicans to Greens) present the existence of protests as evidence of a "healthy" democracy, or take the opportunity to remind us that by being granted our "right of dissent" we are reaping the gifts of this country's "freedom", the demonstration is only serving to reinforce the existing system. Hmm, could such actions be one of the safety valves that prevent the necessary explosion?

Also, by buying into flavor-of-the-week protests that primarily address only the latest issue on the popular radar, as spoon-fed by politicians and the corporate media, attention is diverted from the system as a whole—the structure that permits such actions precisely because they pose no real threat. A sense of context—in the present, past, and future—an overall understanding of how capitalism and hierarchical powers remain entrenched, is lost through distraction. Without that awareness, how can those chains be smashed?

I went to a march last weekend that was primarily designed as a punk response to the looming war. The action resonated for me in a way that most haven't lately. Our visibility as a group of punks (accented by the profusion of free "Punx Against War" shirts), who, ideally at least, hold in common some basic ideas about the nature of the system, allowed the gathering to transcend other reactions to war. It created the potential (whether actualized or not) to promote some of the beliefs with which punk was at one time associated. With the volume of literature prepared in both Spanish and English, it was a good opportunity to interact with a variety of curious people on the street. There was also the feeling of reclaiming public space, though only in as much as the system permitted it, which can be momentarily inspiring. That there was a giant flatbed trailer with a rotation of live bands was definitely energizing.

At one point though, while I was handing out papers, a man from Mexico who was watching from a bus stop engaged me in conversation. "What is this about?" he asked. When I began to say that it was a response against the impending war, he quickly stopped me. "Yes," he said, "and I agree, but what does the naked woman in the procession have to do with that? Doesn't that only serve as a distraction from the message?" Now it was my turn to agree with him. The action had been announced as a parade and many of the costumes (or lack of) certainly seemed to be getting more attention than the signs. There was an element of festivity, which seems to permeate most of the demonstrations in this country, and relegate them, in large part, to the realm of entertainment value, dooming them to fall short of posing even a symbolic threat to the system. Of course there is a place for both creativity and humor in dissent. Yet, I have to cringe when a May Pole ritual comes to define a Reclaim the Streets May Day event (not surprisingly called a "celebration"), while in simultaneous protests around the world people are clashing with the cops in potentially liberating experiences, where boundaries are pushed for at least a moment. From such actions comes the visceral sense that power can be defeated, rather than briefly ignored as we are anesthetized by an outdoor party. Though it seems likely that cops may be more lenient the more festive the event, I'd rather not be relegated to seducing my freedom with a glittery skirt or a clown hat.

Well, now that I've been critical as fuck, what can I offer as an alternative form of resistance? Nothing, because I can only reflect on what actions make sense for me personally. If participation doesn't come from that direction, then it is only mimicking external ideologies, which, no matter how inspiring, become enslaving as soon as they replace individual thought and choice. In spite of all the potential for anti-war reactions to become simply band-aids on the latest wounds, I do still feel a desire to act in response to the present situation. As one who inadvertently funds the US military by still paying taxes, and who profits to some extent off the dubious privilege of being born in this country, I do want to express my dissent. However, that response must remain consistent with my primary goal of wishing to see the structures of capitalism, imperialism, and hierarchy completely dismantled.

Michelle Steinberg

Adee Licious

The Anti-War Demonstrations in Pensacola

The anti-war demonstrations started here in Pensacola on September 19 last year with around forty somewhat apprehensive and slightly scared people attending a downtown protest. This would turn into a weekly ritual that went on every Saturday at noon for the next nine months.

Forty people may seem like a small amount of people if you live in Washington DC or San Francisco, but for Pensacola, Florida, that is a lot. Especially considering the fact we live in the center of the Bible Belt, and that this is a Navy town.

That makes what went on here so much more important, that this town does not reflect a radical way of life at all, really. People still drive around with big confederate flag stickers on their cars that say "Heritage Not Hate," and on one of the main roads there is a big sign that says "Adoption Not Abortion."

The anti-war demonstrations here were important for several reasons, but mostly because they countered the lack of media coverage given to a dissenting point of view concerning the portrayal of the events of September 11 and the "War on Terrorism."

During the demonstrations, reactions varied. Some people driving by gave the finger, some people stopped and asked why we were protesting, and some people even parked their cars and joined in. All that said, it may not seem like a lot, but thirty people (or sometimes five) on a sunny Saturday afternoon holding signs that said NO WAR in this town probably left a mark on some passersby. Whatever the protests accomplished, at the least they let people know that there was opposition to this "War on Terrorism" right here in Pensacola, and educated some people on subjects that the media did not.

Sadly, though, for some people there were repercussions. Nick Braune, one of the main organizers and a philosophy professor at the local community college, was fired from his job specifically because of his involvement with the demonstrations. He and his family ended up having to move to Texas to find work shortly after his first year teaching here ended. Also, *The Real Paper*, one of the local alternative weeklies, a liberal paper that was very punk friendly, was forced to fold because they ran anti-war articles and had their advertisers bail out on them.

Still, the demonstrations continued and went on for nine months until the last week of June. That's so impressive!

I'm Totally Against the War!

I guess if you lived here you wouldn't really know that, 'cause my little brown face was barely seen on the corner of Garden St. and Palafox. I was usually too busy being a drunk punk the night before to pop out of bed, get dressed, and ride my bike downtown to meet up with everyone. All of my housemates went every week, though, so it made me look really stupid.

At least twice a month, though, Josh got me out of my bed and room to go. One of the most memorable times I went, these navy guys and gals were across the street from us shouting something. I think one of my busted friends screamed "Bring it on!" or something, so these kids stared crossing the street.

"Fuck, the buzz cuts are going to kick our asses," is what I was thinking. They were freaking out and were like, "What are you guys talking about, no war? Do you want to get raped by terrorists?"

What the Fuck!

One of them started coming towards my friend like he was going to hit him and his friend was holding him back. He was a black guy. I wanted to take him to the side and say, "Shit, you shouldn't even be in the navy. This country that you're fighting for does not give a shit about you or me—we're black. I know we're young, but back in the day our great grandparents were fighting in World War II in this country and could not even fight side by side with white soldiers. They were treated like dogs, and many of them got beat up and lynched when the war was over—in their fucking uniforms!"

At the same time it's so hard to say that, because so many young black people are hassled to join the military throughout high school, especially in poor neighborhoods. I'm not sure if I was not hassled because I'm a girl or what, but I remember my cousin constantly had those military guys at his house trying to recruit him and it never really happened to me. I don't think it is a race issue, though, as much as it is a class issue, because lots of people are opposed to wars and the military and would rather have nothing to do with it—but when you're broke and hungry, and someone tells you that you can have all of your college paid for and can get paid if you work and pretend to be proud of "your" country for a few years, and you have little or no knowledge of other options, what would you do?

It's easy for kids like us to say that the military sucks (which it does) and call people assholes and murderers for joining it. It's also a privilege we have, as people who have been educated about other options besides joining the military. We should remember to recognize this—instead of calling people assholes and murderers, let's try and talk it out, understand where others are coming from, and spread the fucking knowledge!

I do a zine called *Finger on the Trigger.* Issues #3 and #4 are available for $1 each, from me. Issue #5 soon to come for the same. Keep it real!

Adee Licious
806 E. Belmont, Pensacola, FL 32501

Dan Profane Existence

What I have to say about the prospects of another war in Iraq will not contain any great new revelations as to why it's stupid. Certainly most of the people reading *MRR* will already know that and there're undoubtedly much better writers, already working on this magazine, who can express it better. However, I refuse to be silent and not speak out. I refuse to sit back and do nothing while my unelected government further terrorizes foreign peoples at will. I refuse to hide my anger. Fucking hobbit motherfuckers! Ach! OK, I feel a little better already.

So the thing that gets me about all this fucking war hype is that it's just that—a bunch of fucking hype to make us average Americans feel better. Why Iraq? I'll tell you. The criminals in the White House will profit from the deal afterwards. Who is in the White House and who do they represent? The oil companies and energy interests are your answer. All of these assholes are connected by family or fortune, and they will reap huge profits when Iraq's energy resources are divvied up after a friendly puppet government is installed. Meanwhile, us average people will ultimately have to pay for the war later through taxes, a recession, layoffs, and of course being the most hated people on Earth. This says nothing about the people who will ultimately have to do the fighting. This ain't gonna be another cake-walk Dessert Storm financed by Saudi oil barons. Do you think the Iraqi people are going to give up the fight so easily after watching their children die from ten years of US-enforced sanctions? Do you think the Arab nations will support this war after watching our little Israeli colony decimate their Palestinian neighbors?

Anyway, back to the average Americans—what a bunch of whiny little fucks! The continual beating of the war drum is ridiculous, and those who support it just make me want to puke. If you want to talk about righteous anger, then talk to a Russian or Polish World War II vet, or a Holocaust survivor. Yes, it's pretty awful that 3000 some people died on September 11. Yes, those responsible should be punished. I won't argue that. And good riddance to the Taliban anyway. But gee whiz, why don't they tell you there's good money to be made by building a gas pipeline across Afghanistan? It was just the excuse we needed to take care of all of those so-called trouble spots and rogue (i.e., potentially profitable) nations. The end result will be a corporate feeding frenzy signed, sealed, and delivered by the American public.

So what the fuck can we do? Well, the list is endless, but the first thing is, don't be a jackass and sit back and do nothing! How about going out and protesting and letting those trite little flag waving fuckers know where they can shove it? Too scared to do that? Well there's other things you can do too. Make sure your local post office never has any military recruitment propaganda or Selective Service cards (and you know whose ass they can kiss when they threaten you for not signing up). Flyers, stickers, and spray paint are cheap means of guerrilla communication. Support you local pirate radio (and independent everything). Hell, you can get yourself a bicycle and make yourself healthy, all the while boycotting the oil companies (they can't profit if you don't buy). There's just so much you can do, but it starts with making that first little bit of effort. Before you can get off your knees, you've gotta get off your ass, punk!

Dan Profane Existence

Samantha Sunshine

I recently sent a job application to a Los Angeles organization called the California Peace Action Network (CPA), and they sent back a long and dramatic questionnaire (long before they sent me a long and dramatic rejection letter) to fill out. One of my favorite questions on it was, "Why has the Peace Movement failed?" My immediate reaction was to reply, "The Peace Movement is remembered as a white, liberal, hippy, college-student, pot-smoking, draft-dodging bunch of elitists, who a huge majority of the population cannot relate to." Easy enough. But then I also realized, "peace" is a pretty difficult idea for most people to conceive of, when power is completely unattainable in the first place. Most of us do not feel that we have any authority in our political system locally, much less globally. "What the fuck can I do about it?" has now turned into a national anthem.

So you think you know what I will say next, do you? That you should "Get up and do something!" that "there are tons of people out there fighting this struggle in our communities," and "Every single voice counts." Which is probably so, but it's not what I was going to say. I really don't believe that shit at all. The truth is, there *are* a shit-

load of organizations just like the CPA; even local unions in every state are trailing the anti-war movement because a lot of workers in this country are being affected by the war. But really, international war has been happening before 9/11, is happening right now, and will continue to happen for the rest of our fucking lives, and we really have nothing to say about it. That is the reality.

Last week, I went to see Eric Mann from the Bus Riders Union speak about his new book, *Dispatches from Urban*. The topic of war was pretty inescapable, and while I found nothing new or exciting in his perspective, I was blown away when he stated, "The black community is now overwhelmed with a new wave of American patriotism." Other whites in the audience clapped and roared in agreement. I, on the other hand, was sick to my stomach that men like Eric Mann are representing the so-called radicals at international conferences. Is he aware of the not-so-new practices of intimidation, marginalization, and racial profiling presentaly existant in the US? If so, did he not connect the "sudden wave of patriotism" in America to personal protection?

Attempting not to be jaded, I have to believe that we have the capacity to fight against the wars in the US. There are wars against women, people of color, LGBTQ communities, workers, poor and homeless people, non-English speakers, disabled, illiterate, unemployed, under-represented, undocumented people...it goes on forever. We are literally at war in our own country every single day, and it is these groups that are being oppressed *daily*. Keeping bottled up what you learn in college, in *Adbusters*, in *Maximum*, and making information exclusive rather than educating others, is really doing nothing at all to better yourself or your communities. This shit *has* to be shared with folks around us so that we can begin to build power in our communities and attack our political system and those making decisions in our names.

Samantha Sunshine
criticalmiss@hotmail.com

Rachel McLean

The Gulf War

This story is not fiction, so names have been changed to protect confidentiality.

Leaning over the back of the dilapidated Drop-in Center couch, I watch in disbelief as Tom Brokaw announces live on CNN that the US is at war with Iraq, while behind him, scud missiles streak through an orange-black fog in a dizzying loop.

Carrie yells, "Fuck! They're gonna bomb New York next. All my family are in New York." Trash starts crying, "All my friends are in Vancouver, they're gonna bomb Seattle next and Vancouver's just two hundred miles away."

Their words fade out and all I can see is the TV screen, like when you stare at a star for a long time and everything is just dark gray dots, including you.

"My brother is in Jerusalem," I say, barely breathing. The conversation halts and they all look at me. "Really?" Their brooding bubble of *Red Dawn* paranoia bursts for a moment as reality sets in.

"Roach's brother is in Jerusalem."

"They're bombing Jerusalem."

"Oh my God! Do you know if he's OK?"

"No, I don't know."

This isn't happening. I can't believe this. I almost want to join the drama and milk it for what it's worth, but that would be blasphemous. What if he really dies?

No. I know he'll be okay. He's always doing crazy shit and getting away with it. That's not even the issue. The issue is that the US is fucking *bombing Iraq* and it's all for oil. Not to save innocent people from Saddam Hussein. Not to save them from US guns. Not to right the problems that we created in the first place, and *definitely* not because Bush actually gives a shit about anything.

No. We're bombing Iraq because evil rich yuppies need their fucking oil. And I just left home two weeks ago so I can't call my mom to see if my brother's okay. I can't believe this. What am I doing here watching this on TV when my brother is in Jerusalem and I'm out on the streets?

Let's go. We gotta go. We have to make this stop. What are we gonna do? Bomb. Fuck shit up. Break glass, yell, run, spray paint. It's not working fast enough. I'm fucking pissed and scared.

At the protests I see teachers and friends there, asking why I haven't been in school. There are signs saying, "Bush, pull out like your father should have," and "What if Iraq's major export was broccoli?" which make me feel angry and laugh.

Some white revolutionary in a black bandana hands us spray paint cans and little strips of paper with slogans on them. He says, "Here, go write these over at the Federal Building." We drop the slogans, keep the spray paint and head for the squat.

Robbing a liquor store on the way, I am nervous walking in. I feel guilty, put on a tough face, and head for the cans of Fosters, trying my hardest not to look fifteen. The owner grabs a case of beer from Shawn, but the rest of us still have forties in our hands. The owner throws two bottles of wine and curses at us as we run away. Bullet walks out of some music store with a huge boom box stereo. Says the guy didn't even argue. Just said, "Take it and go." He ends up selling the stereo for weed, and we sit rolling joints in the back of the punk record store.

Vikki and Bullet are talking about heading for the mountains. "If they beat you up, just roll into a ball and cover your head," Bullet says. "Me and Vikki are heading north. I've got family up there where we can stay. If you want to come with us you better come now. Shit's going down, man. The revolution is here."

But wait. How can we figure out anarchy now? Tear gas still stings my throat and I'm all removed. It's too soon.

We take on the Bay Bridge later that night. A cop car explodes and we knock over newspaper stands, smashing the windows of the military Recruiting Office with glee.

As Carrie and I walk back from the Bay Bridge showdown, she says to me proudly, "Don't tell anyone, but Bullet told me he thinks I'm the prettiest girl in SF." Damn, I guess he's not going to be sleeping with me anytime soon. "But what about Vikki?" I ask her, "She's pregnant, you know."

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"I don't know about this," she says later.

"What do you mean?"

"Violence. Rioting. I don't think it works. I don't think it solves anything."

"I know, I've been thinking about that too," I say.

We stop talking for a minute, then I say, "Hey, everybody's way ahead, let's go catch up." She looks at me, disappointed, and we run together towards our friends.

The next day at he Drop-in Center, me and Jimmy cut out the San Francisco Chronicle article about a cop being knocked unconscious by protesters throwing rocks on the Bay Bridge. I give a big hug and a high five to Jimmy, reveling in the closeness that this brings. We haven't been so close anymore since we slept together, too-drunk fucking on a rooftop corner, looking down terrified at the traffic below.

Find out later Jimmy has HIV. Adam looks at me smiling and says, "I'm glad I used a condom when I fucked you, Roach."

His friend says, "You should have used two," and laughs.

Rachel McLean
3269 25th St., San Francisco, CA 94110
cookiesnice42@hotmail.com

Travis Fristoe

Thirteen Arguments Against the Bombings

1. Thus I rose from my bed, unable to sleep. Whether too much coffee, a lingering soccer injury, that suspected ulcer/hernia, or overall dread, caused it, I cannot say. There is a war going on, more than one. This is old news. I have serious doubts about the possibility of lasting, monogamous love. I think Ivan, the cat sleeping at my feet, is being eaten alive by a parasitic worm. He used to be so strong, a total thug tomcat, and now he looks like a ghost. How did we get so fragile while smug America sleeps like a milk-fattened baby?

2. Contemporary poets commonly link their private pain with wrongs going on around the world. Personal holocausts and crumbling empires. Treacherous stuff—only a cripplingly personal philosophy lets a broken heart carry more weight than ethnic cleansing. Sure, to the lovesick one, the loss is acutely and profoundly more devastating than what's going on in the oil regions of the East, but how do you justify that? You can't. You don't.

3. We, in the children's department of the public library, were asked to make a display for the anniversary of 9/11, the newly-dubbed Patriot's Day. Without prodding, the other librarians immediately started putting out books on the immigrant experience, tolerance, and diversity. I start pulling books on the Gulf War, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Yes, these are small acts—gestures maybe—but dialogue (and bloodshed) continues, with or without our input.

4. During wartime, every song must mean more. I think of Joe Lally calmly singing "I'm not a citizen" with Bartleby-like conviction. Even the pop-punkness of J-Church becomes grave on a line like "I'm embarrassed to be an American." If our songs weren't black and white before, they are now. Like last week, closing your eyes during a punk sing-a-long at a benefit show, versus dancing with your eyes closed to old wave records. Walking home afterwards. What do we do afterwards?

5. The relevance of that first town meeting at the Civic Media Center not long after 9/11. How much saner it felt to be in a room full of people admitting they're scared of what's going to happen next. Being surrounded with people from my town that I didn't view as human garbage. Now, the Community Coalition Against War and Terrorism plans another protest on 13th & University on the day (the unspecified day) that we start the preemptive bombing of Iraq. At the 24-hour vigils they held before, the protesters were hit with piss-filled balloons.

6. An indy comic compilation from a local

company released hot on the heels of 9/11 made it painfully clear how narcissistic the overwhelming majority of my peers are. These wars, obviously, mean more than an interruption in our commute to class or work. Remember the Gulf War? Did we stop it, or has it lain in waiting for the right time to strike?

7. My gut reaction to repeat Malcolm X's quote on the JFK assassination. "The chickens came home to roost."

8. What word offer us. Arundhati Roy's articles "The Algebra of Infinite Justice" and "Brutality Smeared in Peanut Butter"; Auden's poem "September 1, 1939"; Vollmann's first novel, *An Afghanistan Picture Show: or, How I Tried to Save the World*; Carolyn Forche's poem "The General"; the prescient dread of Don DeLilo's *The Players*; Sherman Alexie's *Reservation Table of the Elements*; Etc.

9. What complete, undeniable dicks we are as a country. Not paying our United Nations dues and still demanding anti-abortion clauses on world health bills, demanding full exemption for US soldiers and politicians in the World Court, expecting unquestioning support from our "allies." Who is truly surprised at the ferocity of our enemies?

10. I admit, I found some of the *New York Times* 9/11 obituary section pretty compelling. Which details the survivors chose to include in a three-paragraph summary of a person's life. But lest I get too caught up in my leisure-time newspaper reading, where the fuck are the obits and announcements for the dead Afghanis and Iraqis? Their dead and dying are mere numbers of collateral damage, buried in our collective American narcissism.

11. Trickle-down economics to finance the killings. Workers at the university no longer are able to take classes for free. Workfare increases. Educational and library budgets are shrunken. Tax dollars from our paychecks force our complicity.

12. My mom, a civil servant at Cape Canaveral, can't receive my emails because they're from a hotmail account.

13. Leaving the party to come home and write this. Not that my friends aren't charming, the food just what I needed, and the weekend full. But where are our small, fierce acts of resistance?

Travis Fristoe
PO Box 13077, Gainesville, FL 32604-1077, obscurist@hotmail.com

Lane Van Ham

There's a simple reason why the United States shouldn't be allowed to go to war with Iraq. It doesn't have anything to do with the effectiveness of inspections, the harm done to dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians, or who armed Saddam Hussein in the first place. These, and many issues, are worthwhile grounds for dissent, but the biggest reason of all for opposing this mad crusade is that if the United States goes to war with Iraq, it will win. And a US victory in Iraq is something the world, including the population of the United States itself, cannot afford.

Back in 1991, President George Bush hailed the Gulf War as a sign of "the New World Order." Unpacked, the meaning of the phrase was as follows: for years, everyone around the planet wanted international cooperation for peace and harmony, and the only thing that kept it from happening was the USSR. Now, with the Soviet Union in decline, it could no longer interfere with the global desire for prosperity, and the country that best embodied freedom and progress, the United States, would selflessly make these values a reality for all comers, while punishing those who disrupted the happy scene.

The fable managed to pass as serious political discourse, though a minority of skeptics found the implications far more sinister. The demise of a repressive, totalitarian Soviet state was worth celebrating, but without another superpower as a counterbalance, what would hold the United States back from extending its control over the entire Earth?

It's been eleven years since a war with Iraq raised the prospect of such a global "order;" now, another war with Iraq is threatening to enshrine it as reality. Never in world history has a nation had as much coercive power as the United States presently holds. Coercive power consists of both "carrots" (giving rewards, usually economic) and "sticks" (meting out violent punishment), and the US has plenty of both. The US military dwarfs that of any other nation to a degree that is almost inconceivable. Its technology and productive capabilities far outstrip other nations, friendly or otherwise, at over $300 billion per year, the US military budget is over five times that of the nearest competitor, Russia, and more than 22 times as large as those of Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria combined. (From another angle, the military spending of these seven "rogue states," China, and Russia all put together is barely a third of the US's own annual armament.) The US has permanent military bases in over 70 allegedly sovereign, independent nations around the world. Meanwhile, through its influence in the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the US has imposed drastic "structural adjustment programs" (widely, and somewhat poetically known by the acronym "SAPs") that effectively curb nationalistic development in the Third World and hold poor countries hostage to the priorities of Western capital.

These are, of course, two sides of the same coin, and government documents openly acknowledge that military might is a helpful factor in shaping economic policies that will further enrich the United States. That is, trade agreements and international lending happen under conditions not unlike a Mafia-style "protection" racket in which poorer countries negotiate in the imposing shadow of the Pentagon. All of which means the US is an increasingly unequal "partner" in international relations. While cynically preaching freedom and the rule of law, the US is able to pick and choose which rules actually matter and to whom they should apply. Futher, it is able to create an illusion of consensus whenever it has to by giving desperate nations piecemeal aid in exchange for support.

Here's how a US victory in Iraq would tilt the playing field of 21st century politics even more. First, the importance of oil, cliché as it seems, cannot be overstated. Oil is, quite simply, the linchpin of the global economy, and the world's most valuable natural resource. Controlling oil means access to profit and immeasurable political power. If economic sanctions in place since 1991 were lifted, Iraq would surely shun the US and make oil deals with Russia and France instead. This outcome could be avoided through a US war that ended in "regime change." With Iraq safely within its sphere of influence, the US would then be able to turn its attentions to Iran, another Middle Eastern nation that has refused to bow to the great white father, and move on from there. The Bush Administration has laid out in fairly graphic terms what its philosophy is: global US domination, maintained by a doctrine of preemptive military attacks. Launching a war on Iraq would be an important step toward making those ambitions reality.

This is scary, horrifying stuff, and not just for the planet at large. Those of us in the United States are at least somewhat to blame ourselves, for it is impossible to live here and not be at least partially corrupted by the spoils of empire. Even if, as has been amply documented, real wages in this country have remained stagnant for three decades, the average United Statesian consumes resources at a level unmatched anywhere else on Earth. US elites do not distribute enough riches for everyone to share them equally, but they distribute enough to buy peoples' loyalty, banking—quite rightly—on the assumption that few will bite the hand that (over)feeds. Yet this bribery must be rejected, for the Bush clique have already demonstrated their contempt for functioning, participatory democracy and the general welfare in numerous ways. They are unlikely to curb this tendency themselves. If successful abroad, the logic of "self-defensive" first strikes and a two-tiered legal system will be openly applied to eviscerate the Constitution at home—a process already underway in the actions of law enforcement since September 1 1, 2001.

Thus we are confronted at this moment by the ominous prospect of a US-based global empire, orchestrated for the benefit of a selfish ultra-minority and administered by a Goliath-like military, neither of which are accountable to or counterbalanced by any international body. In short: we need to oppose this war for the sake of the planet. Democracy, participatory economics, internationalism—whatever we call the vision that guides us, it must be a universal alternative to the Bush Doctrine, wherein the US is the strongman of global plutocracy, enforcing international economic apartheid. The most pressing task for people concerned with democratic globalization must be to challenge US hegemony and maintain that critical space in which it is possible for national and even sub-national actors to experiment with social arrangements independent of free market fundamentalism. Those of us in the United States in particular have the opportunity and obligation to weaken the far right's grip on military and economic power from within.

The need to oppose this war is greater than the sum of particular objections to it. In the larger picture, our resistance to it is in fact an investment—a statement of faith that there is a better future than the one being charted by an imperial US Presidency that will make the development of sustainable, egalitarian ways of life increasingly unlikely.

Lane Van Ham

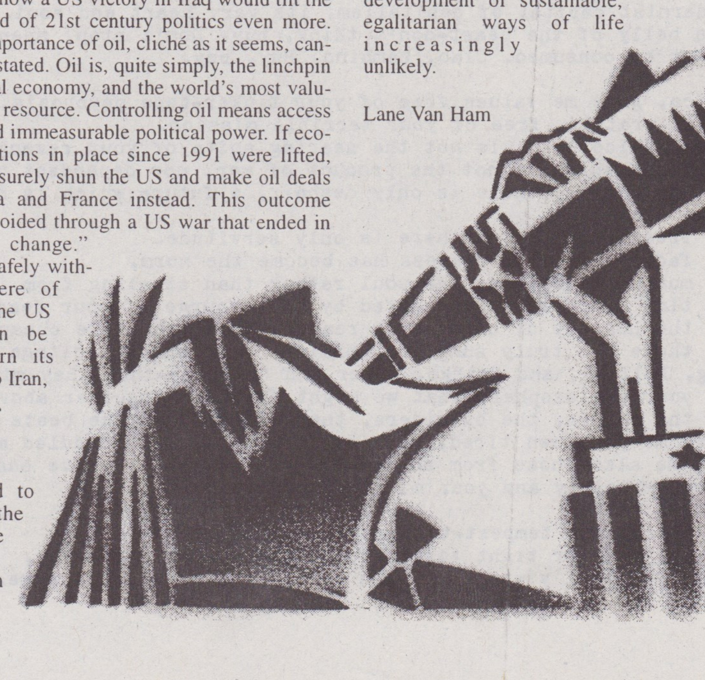

Illustration by Peter Kuper.

Oh America
Penny Rimbaud

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
with conquering limbs astride from land to land;
there, at those sea-washed sunset gates, stands
mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
is imprisoned lightning.
and her name, Liberty, Mother of Exiles.

'Oh, America,' cries she with silent lips,
'give me the ghosts of the people who you destroyed and whose Nation you stole, that I might learn their ancient wisdom and be shown a pathway to solace.
Give me the spirits of those who across dark seas you shipped here in shackles, that the bondage of history might be destroyed and they reunited with their forefathers.
Give me land free of tenure, free of enclosure, land undefiled by cupidity's clasping claws, nor fire scorched by your endless wars; a place where place has not been usurped.
Give me a simple home which is not a rich man's castle, which is not a defence against life, but a confirmation of life itself; give me a roof that will shelter love rather than protect avarice.
Give me oceans which are not hunting grounds, continents which are not killing fields.
Give me air unpolluted by the smokestacks of unbridled commerce, water untainted by your saccharine duplicity.
Give me food which is the fruit of honest labour rather than the curse of abject slavery.
Give me a bed which celebrates free-thinking joy rather than callow lasciviousness.
Give me love which is not ersatz, which is not a prostitution, which is not perverted by your Hollywood heist.
Give me your bodies free of vanity, bodies which are not silicone, not the crude patchwork of the surgeon's knife, nor shrouded by the purdah of tawdry fashion. Cast off the obesity of Narcissus that I might once see you naked and proud.'
Give me a dream, but not your dream, for first you must rewrite it.

Oh, America, did you not see? At the height of the fire, liquid assets flowed like sweet honey from your vaults, ran in streams from your marbled emporiums, past helpless security guards, disarmed by their confusion, and out onto the gold-paved, cinder-caked streets. Tossing aside the theatre of sorrow, reptilian shoals of cocaine-driven brokers, Prozac-popping investors and valium-blind shareholders rushed forward to consider possible gain through the consolidation of loss; shipless pirates training their singular eyes upon a singular windfall. Who really cared from whence the storm had blown? While the buried struggled for air and the caves were as yet inhabited only by the goats, turgid glitterati paced the sidewalks emptily ogling plastic dummies dressed-up to the nines in the fur of aminism depleted, exchanging vacuous synthetic smiles, waiting to see who'd laugh last; no one knew which was which or who was what, no one cared. They were all 'other'. Stifling on the fog of deceit that blinded every bit as much as the dust and smoke, yet sensing deep down that somehow they were complicit in the carnage, corpulent corporate tycoons were aided from the clammy leather back-seats of over-stretched limousines to be led to illicit private bookings. Puffing on cigars as big as their biggest phallic fantasies, they salivated over very special menus, fed their dyspepsia, then belched, rank on usury, while speculating on the rise and fall of their pubescent escorts' cleavages and the rock-solid investments that hung between them: oh yes, diamonds are a girl's best friend, a wife's worst enemy, and a flesh-searing manacle to the poor wretches forced to scrape them free from the earth. Sated by excess and an obsession with a gold whose very liquidity now threatened to smother even their innate ignorance, the tycoons clenched their fat arses and reached out their porky hands toward their torpid escorts' powdered flesh, seeking to leech from it a life-blood that in all their crumpled decadence they had never known. Yet for all the self-delusion of this hedonistic hell, the neon flashed and the billboards brayed through the tragic pall, and the message remained the same: if you're not with us, you're against us-consume. And in their self-imposed impotence the crowds were eager to oblige. The old world of cheese-cake security had been unceremoniously binned, but the new world would be gift wrapped; gadgets and gee-gaws, trinkets and trash-the cluster bombs of consumerism. Money changed hands, but always ended up in the same pockets. Friend or foe, who really cared? You only lived once, that much now seemed conclusive. The essence was simple; this was still the post-modernist capital of capitalism, its very heart and soul, there was no option but to dive deeper into the belly of the beast-don't think, buy. Don't stop, spend. Prove to yourself that you still exist. Consume or be consumed. Ciao, bambino. Buy, buy.

Oh America, give me values free of your ticker-tape psychosis, free of your jingoistic prattle, free of your terrible mission.
Give one justice which is not the searing spite of your revenge.
Give me peace which is not the product of war, nor dependent upon it.
Give me hope. where there is only despair, a future which is not your loathsome crusade.
Give me freedom where now there is only servitude.
Give me face where facelessness has become the norm.
Give me music which feeds the soul rather than stealing from it.
Give me time which is not measured by the scourge of your deadly dollar.
Give me the honesty of considered reason rather than the cheap escape of glib rationalisation.
Give me those who truly sung your praises yet whose heritage you now defile-Whitman, Steinbeck, Ginsberg, Pollock, and Rothko, Ayler and Coltrane-that they might sing again of a love supreme.
Give me your philosophers that we might fly high together above the cuckoo's nest of your insanity.
Give me the madmen, the outsiders, the hustlers and the beats who you so decry,
then give me your own tired, your own poor, your own huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
but give me also those from across the planet who you have enslaved with
your cheap morality and your military might,
and we will wait.
Give the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,
and we will cluster tight together and stand apart from you,
for until you heal yourself, I can offer none of these a home.

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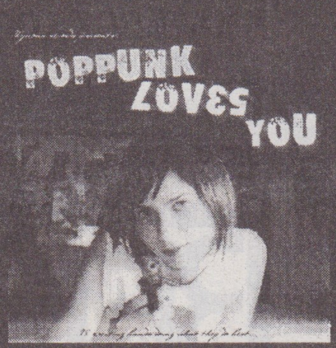

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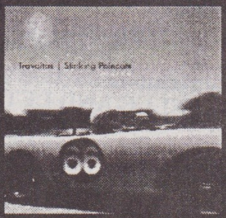

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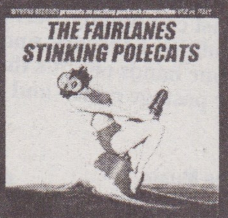

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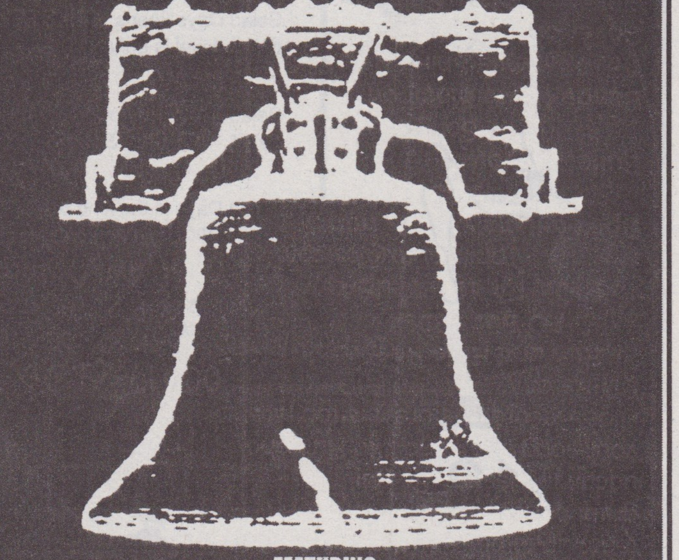

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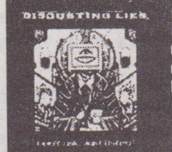

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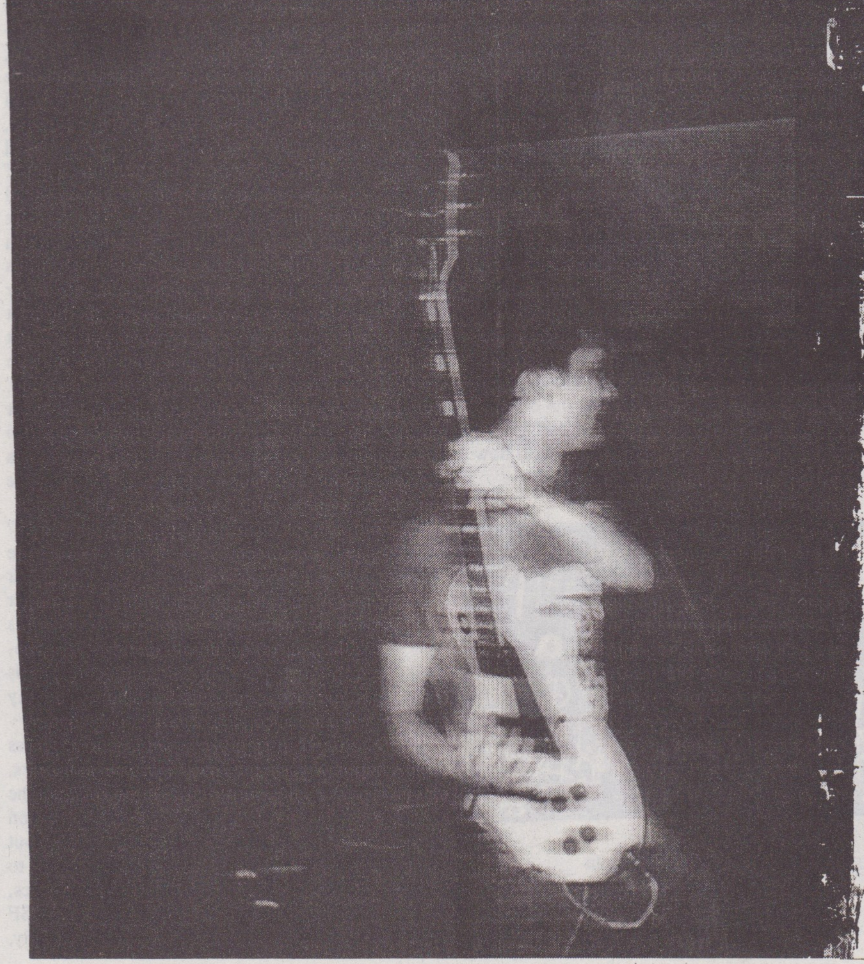

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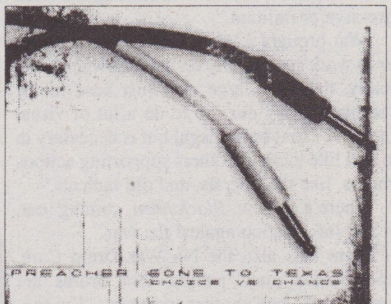

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Portland Protest Report
By Erin Yanke

To do research about Portland punks against the impending war in Iraq, Molly and I went to the big protest on October 5, where it was estimated there were about 9000-12,000 people. We interviewed the punks we came across at the protest. It seems like there were about 40-60 punks there, a middle ground between the 100 that came to protest Bush when he showed up in August, and the weekly candlelight peace vigil at the town square, where about 30 people, but no punks, show up every week.

So you want to know what the Portland punks have done against the war? Well, we sure like to talk. But for action, the best we can say is, the punk propaganda machine is in full effect.

"There are posters wheatpasted up—at North Portland bus stops, on Belmont, and Hawthorne, downtown, and at 12th and South East Burnside. They have anti-war, peace slogans, and punk graphics. They're obviously by punks because the flyers are more confrontational."

"Stencils, graffiti, I don't know if it's punks but there are lots of anarchy symbols, I see more anarchist stuff around."

"I can't think of much, people talking slightly at shows, not in great detail, maybe at the Ranch."

"Punks are complaining a lot against the war. Making posters, handing out literature, citing the devastation of Iraq in the past 12 years."

"The content of the posters says what the news leaves out, like the actual numbers. The UN gave a statistic that 350,000 children have died in Iraq specifically because of American sanctions and bombings, and I feel things like that are often left out. When there is an anti-war feeling, it's often not aggressive or militant."

"War brought a lot of single issue activists together to work specifically on the anti-war issues. Historically, there's a large anarchist base in the punk community, it's our job to do a lot of visual propaganda. It's maybe not legal but is necessary in order to feel like there are others supporting actions and turnouts, like the liberals, and old radicals."

"There's a new *Blackthorn* coming out, with art and information against the war."

There was also the No War Drum Core, with no obvious punk people—but drums are always punk rock. And another comment; "I'm seeing people outside the scene making the connections between the fucked up things, even my Mom asking, 'what's going on?'"

But we're at the protest, all feeling a little helpless and ineffective, and of course, talking about it.

"Punks get frustrated with things that seem symbolic and meaningless, and most of the time demonstrations are like punching the little toe of a giant monster, but it's the best you can do. It becomes frustrating to people who are used to a culture where they have an immediate effect upon their life, instead of waiting for a pie in the sky. It feels pointless and then the protest usually becomes a battle with the pigs and you get the shit kicked out of you. On the other hand I came to this one because I feel there's enough public dissent right now, that the media is trying to cover it up. I feel that just for thousands of people to show up is powerful."

"More normal people are protesting. There are some punks around, but not a lot. I think they're getting scared after getting beaten up at Critical Mass and the Bush protest. My friends were getting shot and maced, and there are a lot of people filing lawsuits against the city right now."

"What to do? More visible stuff, rallies, but I wish a few people could hand out flyers on the street corner. Just one guy does it alone. I don't expect everyone who's into doing art and publishing to be all about the war, but how 'bout putting up stuff in public? It's a public issue, but people just talk about it in their homes and listen to the radio, say it's getting more fucked up. I'm guilty of that."

That's the kind of stuff people said when we asked them. If you're in South East Portland, walking along the tracks, you'll see, in between the fact that Gary loves Lisa too much and various territorial tags, there are messages: "HOPE" is written in huge letters, like they meant it as a command, and "Fuck Bush's Bombs." North West Portland has "No Bush War" on the sidewalks. Bush is a Biohazard is all over town, and North and NE are covered: "Fuck War," "Rise Up," etc. Only these last ones do I directly attribute to the punks—they're scruffy and in the neighborhood, or on the walls of streets that are corridors to our neighborhood. Stencils are up all over, but covered quickly are stencils of old punk lyrics commenting on our recent political situation.

"The graffiti in North and NE Portland is being erased after like two days. Vera (Katz, our mayor) is doing as much as she can to discourage free protest."

Mostly what's left up is the "they pepper-sprayed babies" stencil, a reference to when Bush showed up in town and the cops decided to have a riot. As an aside, Republican senator Gordon Smith (who was having the fundraiser that brought Bush to town) was given a bill by the city totaling the cost of cop overtime, but we don't know if he also has to pay for the rubber bullets and the pepper spray.

So, Portland Punks against war act like Portland Punks. There's evidence we're out there, but not much bringing us together. The circle As are on the wall, but mutual aid is hard to see, and solidarity is about the longshoremen and their lockout. It's an indian summer day though, and maybe the punks are just grabbing the last few dry days for bike rides without raingear and making out outside. With the rain, maybe we'll find focus and give a hand, and in spring we will report back with how we helped stop the sense of impending doom.

By Iggy Scam, photos by Paul Curran

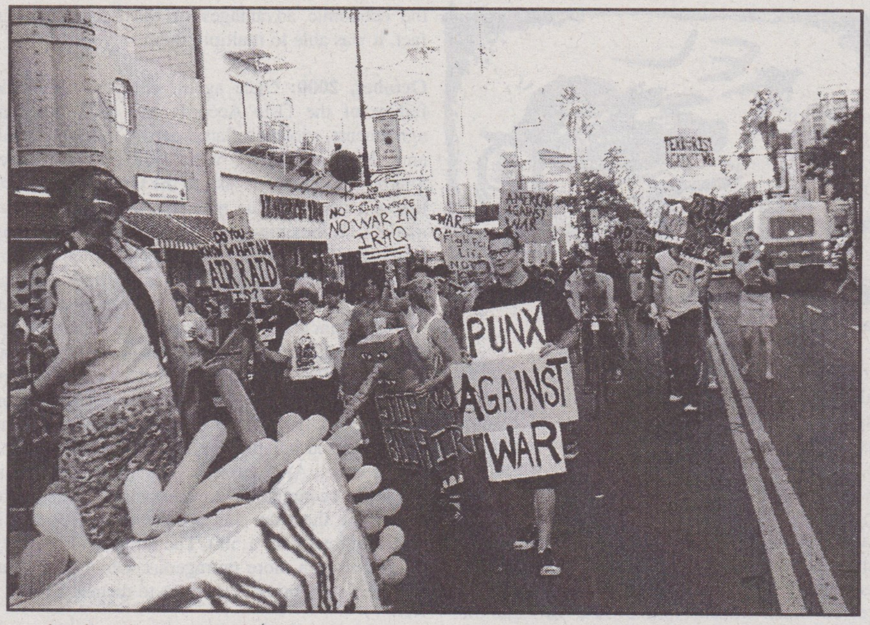
Saturday, October 6, a group of about sixty loud, costumed, and sort of drunk punk rockers took over the streets of the Mission with an anti-war parade. The parade, following a truck pulling a U-Haul trailer with bands playing on it, went from 24th and Mission BART station, up Mission to 16th, and then to Dolores Park via Valencia and 20th Streets, in an effort to bring anti-war protest and information in a fun and exciting way directly to the people of the neighborhood we live in. People danced like hell in the streets, the cops couldn't shut it down, and thousands of bilingual anti-war papers—and more than a little beer—were passed out along the way! Here's more, or less, how we planned it and why:

For months, this summer, Bush has been pressuring Congress and the world to allow the US to start this completely unprovoked and unjust war, apparently so that people will forget all about the current complete economic collapse we're mired in. For a while, it seemed like Bush was just out there talking about Evil again, but with the release of the so-called Bush Doctrine, it became clear that we might actually be headed back into a real war with our time honored Arch Enemy, played by the hapless Iraq, a country that's starting to look like that team that always gets trotted out to play and lose to the Harlem Globetrotters so that the crowd will have something to cheer about (If we go back to war with Iraq, does Saddam Hussein become "The New Hitler, pt. II"?)

As the war loomed, I was starting to feel sort of hopeless about it, wondering, "What the hell are we going to *do* about this, anyway?" and when my band, Allergic To Bullshit, played in late September at the Balazo Gallery, I was hoping to use the show as a way to get everyone there to talk about the upcoming war and think about what our ideas were to fight back. That day, I went to the library and xeroxed old articles from the paper from the day the bombing started in the first Gulf War. At the show, I read news reports to the crowd between songs about huge spontaneous demonstrations that broke out all over San Francisco that day, where people shut down the Bay Bridge and the Federal Building and "5,000 protesters marched from 24th and Mission through the Mission, Castro, and the Haight" setting cop cars on fire and all that. Then, before we played our cover of "Courage" by the Minutemen, me and Ivy passed out a huge pile of freshly stolen cans of spraypaint we'd racked that afternoon, saying, "OK, there's a lot of blank walls out there and I know everyone's got a lot on their minds about now with this war coming up, so here's some paint." Well, it was, at the very least, an attempt to put some spraypaint into the hands of the drunkest and wildest people we know, but was it something more? I don't know, but everyone I talked to that night about the war was already fed up, too, and saying, "We have to *do* something." Anandi came up with the idea for a parade and in a few days, we had a flyer on the streets.

But why a parade? Why in the Mission? Or, really, why even do a parade at all? In SF, there will always end up being a really huge anti-war march, downtown, if the US starts threatening war somewhere in the world. In fact, Not In Our Names was doing one on the 7th, the day after our proposed parade, and there was certain to be thousands there from all over the Bay Area when that day came. Did there need to be two events?

I really think so. I have been in countless enormous Bay Area protest marches over the years, and some have been truly inspiring. It's one of the reasons I live here, to feel that the average person on the street might really be just as pissed about Bush's bullshit war as I am. But I've also come to think that there's a lot of problems with the tactics, or just the overall template of the traditional SF march. The marches are always downtown, early,



on weekends, when no one is on the street but tourists, who, of course, come the SF to see things like real, live anti-war marches. The marches are so frequently identical in size, attitude, and location that they seem like weekly occurrences with obscure meaning. "Why are those people marching? Oh, they're just the people who march around here all the time." When you're shouting at deserted buildings in the financial district on a Saturday morning, its clear that the whole event is in some way to be symbolic and for the media's consumption. But, of course, the media always ignores or undercounts the protests, gets the message wrong on purpose, and then chooses to interview the most obvious wingnut in the crowd to fill in a quote or two. I do think it's important that they happen. It does mean a lot when people across the country can see that a march in SF had 8,000 people in it against the war, and I understand that there's a lot of people who are against the war, but aren't, say, against capitalism or genetically modified food, or who don't want to join a huge movement, or who don't want to get arrested but just want to simply say that they are opposed to the war, and I think it's important that they have a space to do that.

But I also think of all those spontaneous demos after the first Gulf War, and think that if I was in a Mumia march that tried to take the Bridge today, the *organizers* of the march would probably turn us all in. I think there need to be *more* anti-war voices happening all the time, in all parts of town, where more people can be directly involved in the planning of how the protests will look and feel. I think it would be so beautiful to see spontaneous, anti-war marches throughout the City, on Mission, on Haight, on Castro, on 3rd Street, with 8,000 people marching all over the entire city at once!

I've been inspired a lot by the marches that the Latino day laborers in the Mission have done lately, in protest of the cops' treatment of them as they line up on Cesar Chavez Street every morning to wait to be picked up by people who need workers. They are generally small, ragged looking marches of less than 100 people, but, marching right down the middle of Mission Street on a weekday, during business hours, they are a completely unexpected surprise. People run out of their shops to see what's going on and cheer them on, and their totally out-of-the-ordinary protest style makes you stop and actually see what they're doing. We were hoping that a parade would be a good way to surprise our actual neighbors, instead of the media, into paying attention to what we had to say.

We decided to make it clear in our flyer that our parade was in support of and announcing the certain-to-be-larger rally the next day, and we put the flyer for the N.I.O.N. march on the back of ours. Our main goals were to 1) make something loud and festive happen that would make the late afternoon, family oriented crowd happy on the main working class shopping drag of the Mission, 2) distribute huge piles of strong, bilingual, anti-war info as we walked down Mission, 3) pass out free food at the beginning of the parade to get people to gather in one spot with us and either join us or take info, and 4) be able to hold Mission for at least the eight blocks to 16th/Mission BART. The problem was, there were only like nine days to do all the work leading up to it. That's where *parade* comes in. We told people to try to show up with a bunch of friends, with signs or costumes with their own parade themes. Like Ivy had about five animal suits and Anandi wanted to have the people wearing them hold a sign that said, "Animals for the Ethical Treatment of People." People could, at least, show up with a sign saying where their house was, like "24/Folsom Against The War!" It was sort of an experiment, counting on there being a lot of people out there who were mad about the war who would be excited to have a completely open space to creatively protest it. We purposefully decided to not put a spot where the parade would *end* at on the flyer, so that we could wait and see how big it was and where people felt like taking it.

But the best part of the whole plan was The Flatbed Truck! The idea was to have everyone meet at 24th/Mission BART and then follow a flatbed that would have live, punk bands and speakers playing on it! Fuck Yeah! It'd be just like the low rent Mission version of the Sex Pistols playing on that boat! Jimmy from Shotwell assured us he could get us a flatbed, and we then spent the rest of the week stealing huge bags of beans, rice, and tortillas to make the free burritos to hand out, making huge banners to put on the truck, making signs to carry, and trying to find party hats, because I had written on the flyer "Free party hats for dogs."

I went back and forth between being really worried and stressed out about it and being totally certain that it would all work. I'd never been involved with setting up a protest march, let alone a patently illegal one before. On the one hand, the worst thing that could happen, really, was that we didn't have enough time to flyer and no one would come. You need to have a lot of people to convince the cops that an "illegal" march is now a "legal" march. I was worried that people who did show up wouldn't get the "parade" part, because the traditional march doesn't really encourage too much participation beyond just walking and shouting. But, then, on the other hand, I just felt like whoever *did* show up would be the people who wanted to show up and be part of an anti-war event that day, and even if it was totally small and we were forced to just walk on the sidewalk, handing out the Spanish language info that would be something that we believed in that wasn't happening right now.

Of course, everything seemed like it was going to fall apart the whole week. First Jimmy found out he couldn't get a truck. No one had any money so we had to pretty much steal everything involved in making the parade happen. We decided to rent a flatbed and then found out just hours before the parade that, for some stupid reason, the rental place now wouldn't rent it to us. But pretty much at the last minute, Kat came up with the idea to rent a U-Haul trailer and have it towed by her pickup truck. We sent the free burritos and info over to the BART at 4 pm, the intended starting time, and started decorating the trailer and U-Haul with banners and balloons. For our fearless driver, we'd enlisted "Joe," a punk kid from Hawaii who was currently traveling through town and didn't know a single thing about SF's streets, but was the only one with a valid license who'd do it. Thanks Joe!

Well, the trailer really was the best thing. Seriously, for only $35 you can rent one and have a band play on it and take over the streets of *your* town! When we pulled up—a full hour late for the departure time, of course—the huge crowd of anti-war animals and cheerleaders and people with clown noses raised their signs and cheered like hell! They also raised their beer. Jimmy, dressed as a black and white spotted cow, was passing out cold beer from a keg he had under a rug in a shopping cart. "Cerveza Alto Guerra" he growled at strangers as he passed out cups of foamy brew on the street. The free food and costumes had worked. A huge crowd of bystanders was already waiting excitedly to see what we'd do and someone on the march had already had to go and make 500 more of the anti-war flyers! The parade pulled in behind the truck, and, as soon as the truck lurched out into traffic, driving just a little too fast, we all ran to catch up and Running Ragged started playing the first notes of their set. When Joe finally reigned it in and we all caught up, I looked back and traffic was totally

stopped. The parade had filled out across a now empty Mission Street and the music was echoing off the buildings. People were dancing in the back of the truck and people were lined up along both sides of Mission, smiling and waving and running up to take our literature. Everyone had signs. Everyone was loud. It was great!

The best thing about the parade, among many good things, was just the response was so overwhelmingly positive. People on Mission were holding their kids up to look at us and laughing. People were hanging out of their apartment windows and waving. Periodically, we'd move a little and let some traffic get by us and a lot of the cars honked and gave thumbs up, rolled down their windows and yelled, "No war!" I feel like the wording on the flyer was justified: "This community is against Bush's war." Bands took turns for a while. Allergic To Bullshit took over as we stopped for five minutes in front of Mission Records to fill the street and let the punks at the show there run out and hang out for a bit. Then, SHOTWELL took over as we hit 16th Street.

By now it was clear that though we had a lot of people, we probably didn't have enough to, say, go downtown on Market Street and have a big show in front of City Hall. It seemed good to keep it in the neighborhood, so we headed up 16th to the Mission Street's opposite, the hip main drag. Someone decided we were going to take over the intersection of 16th and Valencia and play a couple songs. When we got there, we all said, uh, well, let's stop, and did, while Jimmy started playing "We Don't Need Your Fucking War" by the Dicks and some of us fanned out, flyering stopped cars, Critical Mass style, and politely telling them what was up and that we'd leave in a minute. I think, all day, I only heard of one car fucking with us and it was there. Ironically, the cops showed up just then to tell us not to block the intersection, while they, of course, *ensured* that we would block the intersection by pulling their cars across the lanes. Pretty funny. Not to be deterred, Jimmy started playing some anti-cop song. A bunch of us talked it over fast and decided that we didn't have enough to people to outright defy the cops, so we told the cops we were going to go to Dolores Park and end it, and they accompanied us the rest of the way, fanning out in front of us and blocking the intersections, professionally, for us to pass. Pretty funny, too. I guess we *did* have enough people to make it a legal march!

The bands took some more turns and then when we got to Dolores Park, the cops cleared out a space for us and told us we had a half hour to play, so Allergic to Bullshit finished out the set. It was such a fun night that about 15 of us ended up driving around for hours, crammed into the truck and the trailer, drinking beer, with Ivy and Joaquin leading anti-war chants through a bullhorn with total strangers all across town. Again, people honked and waved and gave the thumbs up. It was part of a big anti-war weekend, too, as 10,000 showed up for the march the next day in Union Square, and there were marches in small towns all across the US, too (300 in Taos, NM. 150 in Asheville, NC. 100 in Sandpoint, ID, etc.,). I also heard that the next day, a contingent of a hundred folks marched from the Mission to the downtown march and picked up *hundreds* of folks along the way! Don't believe everything you see on TV. There's a lot of people out there who don't want these wars to keep happening and there's a lot of people who are going to do what ever they can to stop them!

Iggy Scam

War Journal

June 5, 1967: Israel launched a "preemptive strike" on its neighboring Arab countries, after a long period of border tension in which each sides was building and expanding its military might. At the end of what have became to be known as the Six Days War, the state of Israel expanded its territory (despite UN resolutions) to include Egyptian (Gaza and the Sinai), Jordanian (the West Bank) and Syrian (the Golan Heights) land. While the last was officially annexed to Israel and its inhabitants received Israeli citizenship, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank remained under military rule. The Sinai was later given back to Egypt after the peace accords of Camp David in 1979.

October 6, 1973: Following the victory of '67, the general mood amongst the Israeli public was one of euphoria and omnipotence. The Yom Kippur war caught Israel unready, and while Israel managed to gain back most of its initial "losses," it was still considered a blow to the Zionist ethos of invincibility.

June 6, 1982: After years of de-facto Israeli military and political intervention in south Lebanon, the IOF (Israeli Occupation Force) finally invaded Lebanon, advancing as far as Beirut. Lebanon turned out to be an almost 20-year adventure and is considered to be Israel's equivalent to Vietnam, with countless Lebanese civilian victims and heavy military losses. In May 2000, Israel officially withdrew from the "security zone," which until then it still had under its control.

December, 1987: During the 80s, the establishment of Jewish settlements on Palestinian land in the West Bank, a forbidden act under the Geneva Convention, continued systematically. That war crime not only robbed Palestinians of their land, but also laid the foundations for an infrastructure of oppression, which in a decade was to disconnect and strangle the Palestinian population. In December of 1987, a person was accidentally run over in a West Bank refugee camp, sparking the residents of the West Bank and Gaza to launch the Intifada (popular uprising) against Israeli occupation. Despite changing its intensity, the Intifada continued well into the early 90s.

September, 1993: After several weeks of secret negotiation in Oslo (Norway), the "Oslo Accords" were signed in Washington by then Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat. What was at first seen as an historical reconciliation between two rival peoples actually allowed for very limited autonomy for Palestinians and made the situation worst for most of them, with deterioration of their economic situation, persecution on ideological grounds, political corruption, and the intensification of segregation between the two societies, creating something resembling the South African Bantustans. Israel was able to present itself abroad as a freedom-loving, moral, democratic state without having to worry about losing the economic advantages of the occupation—in fact, it was able to multiply them.

October, 2000: Once again, after the inevitable failure of the Oslo Accords and its subsequent agreements, violence flared across the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with war criminal Ariel Sharon's provocation visit to the temple mount acting as a catalyst. The new fighting of these days marked the beginning of the second and ongoing Intifada (AKA "El-Aqsa Intifada"), which is characterized by the use of firearms on both sides as opposed to their use only by the Israeli side. An important incident was the riots in Arab villages inside Israel, which demonstrates not only solidarity between Palestinians on both sides of the border, but also discontent with Israeli discrimination towards its large (20 per cent) Arab minority. The police reacted harshly to these riots and killed 13 young Israeli Arab citizens. The number of fatalities in the occupied territories is much, much higher and by the time this article is published will probably total over 1,500. The number of severely injured is even more outrageous. Obviously, what will the future bring is up to us to dictate...

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There may be one small consolation in having a hardcore/punk scene during a war: you will know who's who. Are those kids with the anarchist patches on their backpacks in your town going to face the inevitable aggression as newborn patriots or are they gonna stick to their guns? If the Israeli experience is of any indication, the conflict actually may do some good to your scene.

Just a year ago we were pretty negative about the DIY punk scene becoming a focus of subversion against the Israeli terror unleashed on the Palestinians. But fortunately, it seems like things are improving. I'm not going to lie to you—it's not like we're a mass movement: our voices are very low compared with the chorus of hate and destruction most of the Israeli public are part of. But the majority of the Israeli DIY punk/HC scene is openly against the cult of violence leaded by Sharon. But before we get into more of a scene report, we want to mention the groups and organizations that are fighting the Israeli state terrorism.

ISM: The International Solidarity Movement is a Palestinian-led organization of Palestinian and International activists working to raise awareness to the struggle for Palestinian freedom and an end to Israeli occupation. They employ nonviolent, direct-action methods of resistance to confront and challenge illegal Israeli occupation forces and policies.

The ISM is always in need of international accompaniment, in order to resist the brutal and sometimes lethal violence of the Israeli army and settlers. If you feel that the injustice the Palestinian people suffer from is close to your heart, you can consider going to the occupied territories and joining the ISM in one of their campaigns. It is extremely important that internationals arrive in the occupied territories, as by law, Israelis are forbidden from entering there, and therefore are crippled from becoming an effective barrier to the occupation in such a manner. You can learn more about the ISM activities from: http://www.palsolidarity.org/

Bat Shalom is a feminist peace organization of Israeli women, which works towards a just peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors. That includes recognition of a Palestinian state side-by-side with Israel and Jerusalem as the capital of both. Within Israel, Bat Shalom works toward a more just and democratic society shaped equally by men and women. Bat Shalom works with various other groups as part a broad coalition for peace, tackling the occupation through both direct action and "legitimate" protest. It is also closely related to

"Machsom Watch," which is a coalition of women who monitor the behavior of soldiers in army checkpoints. For more information check http://www.batshalom.org.

One of the most known and active leftist groups in Israel is **Gush Shalom** ("The Peace Bloc"). They are an extra-parliamentary organization, independent of any party or other political grouping. Their aim is to influence Israeli public opinion and lead it towards peace and conciliation with the Palestinian people, based on ending the occupation and accepting the right of the Palestinian people to establish an independent and sovereign State of Palestine in all the territories occupied by Israel in 1967. They have many campaigns, such as the "National Boycott of Settlement Products," which calls people to not buy the output of Jewish settlement industries. This campaign has achieved international proportions.

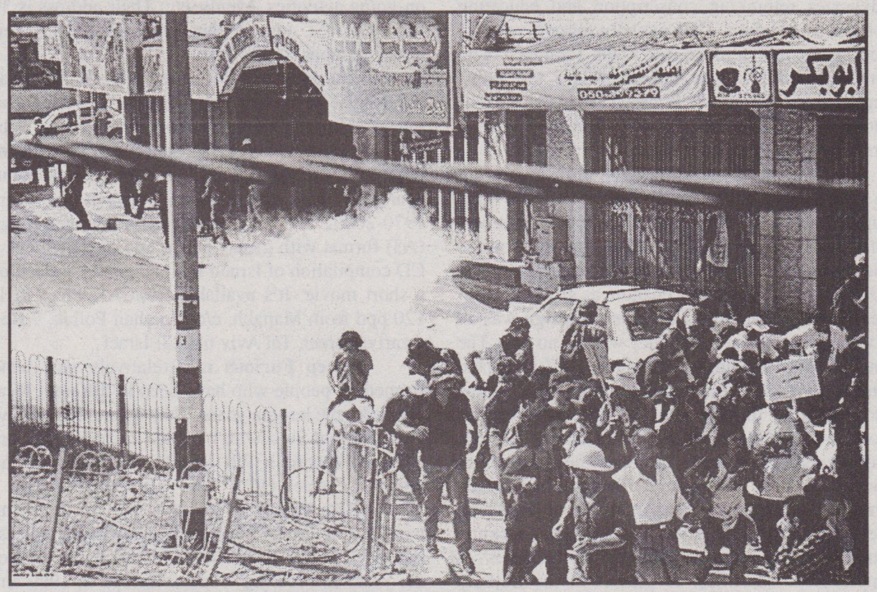
Gush Shalom has also held countless demonstrations and carried out direct actions in response to day-to-day emergencies. Most of these have been joint actions with Palestinians, many in cooperation with other peace and human rights organizations. Among them: the rebuilding of houses destroyed by the occupation army, breaking through "closure" barriers (with the Palestinians doing the same by coming from the other side) demonstrating together with Palestinian villagers against new "hilltop outposts" of the Jewish settlers on Palestinian lands, and harvesting olives on behalf of villagers prevented by the settlers and the army from entering their groves. More info about them can be obtained from: http://www.gush-shalom.org/

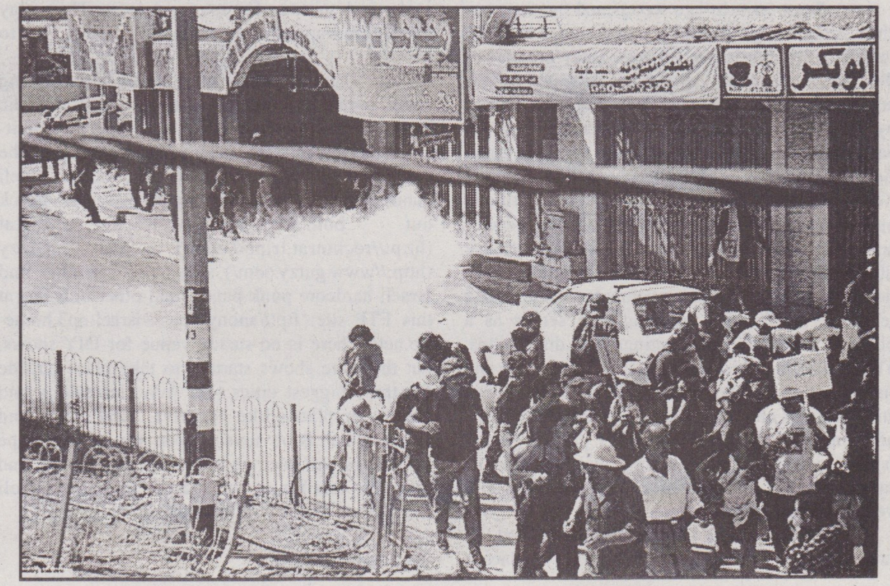
Ta'ayaush is a group who was formed after the beginning of the second Intifada as a joint Arab-Jewish effort and is active on two levels: in struggle for equal rights for the Arab minority which lives inside Israel, and in struggle for the creation of a Palestinian state in all of Cisjordania and Gaza. But unlike many in the Israeli left who prefer to deal in slogans, empty rhetoric, and symbolic actions, Ta'ayaush members and sympathizers try to carry out meaningful, concrete actions. They are mostly known for organizing food and medicine convoys into the territories, which because of the military curfews and the poverty caused by the occupation, have a serious shortage of supplies. Those actions also exposed many Israelis to the horror and brutality of the occupation, a fact that is usually neglected by the Israeli press. The idea is to make concrete actions and not just demonstrations, but since the government and army usually interfere with them, it's not uncommon for them to turn into spontaneous demonstrations. The organization is non-hierarchical, with decision made by consensus.

B'Tselem is the name the Israeli Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories is known by. It was established in 1989 and its aim is to document and educate the Israeli public and policymakers about human rights violations in the Occupied Territories and to help create a human rights culture in Israel. B'Tselem has its own independent researchers and information collectors and is a well-known source of information for the (mostly) international press, human right groups, etc. Mainly, though, the focus of its documentation reflects B'Tselem's objective of providing as much information as possible to the Israeli public as a way of trying to influence political action.

Among other issues, B'Tselem reports have dealt with torture, killings, and injuries done by security forces; restriction of movement; expropriation of land and discrimination in planning and building in East Jerusalem; administrative detention; and settler violence. B'Tselem does not distinguish between violations committed by Israel and those committed by the Palestinian Authority. However, as an Israeli organization, the majority of its efforts are directed at violations committed by "our," the Israeli, government. Check out their site: http://www.btselem.org/

New Profile is a relatively young organization whose main aim is to change the Israeli society from a militarized society of war and might to an actively peacemaking one, in which the rights of all people are respected and promoted equally, and





the military occupation of others' lands ends. Since Israeli military service and military institutions can be blamed for encouraging violence within Israeli society and damaging democratic principles (or not letting them exist in the first place), New Profile advocates rethinking conscription and educating for demilitarization. They actively support youth—both male and female, and their families—who have chosen to resist induction into the army, regardless if the choice is based on political, religious, or moral beliefs. Their site: http://www.newprofile.org/english/index.html

For those who joined the army but refuse to go and serve in the occupied territories, the main support group is **Yesh Gvul** ("There is a limit/border!") This is one of the veteran organizations in the peace movement, founded in response to the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, as growing numbers of soldiers realized that the campaign was an act of aggression in which they wanted no part. The onset of the Palestinian Intifada in 1987 prompted further refusals: the numbers imprisoned came close to 200, though here too, the army backed down from jailing many of the recalcitrant soldiers, suggesting that refusals may have been ten times more numerous. Today the numbers of imprisoned "refuseniks" have more than doubled. To them, Yesh Gvul extends moral and material backing, ranging from financial support for families of imprisoned refuseniks, to pickets at the military prisons where they are held. Their site: http://www.yesh-gvul.org/english.html

Kvisa Schora is a Pro-Palestinian Lesbian and Gay group which was created a year and a half ago. They believe that the "Gay Agenda" has become irrelevant and commercialized in Israel and they want to eradicate prejudice and repression of all kinds, not just homophobia. They are very controversial, both among "straight" society and the gay community, getting a lot of attention for their humorous stunts and demos. They work closely with other organizations such as the aforementioned Gush Shalom and Ta'Ayaush.

For alternative information on the current Intifada, two sites that are extremely recommended are the Israeli Indymedia site (http://www.indymedia.org.il/), the Palestinian Indymedia website (http://jerusalem.indymedia.org/), and the Alternative Information Center (http://www.alternativenews.org/). We also recommend checking out the writings of two radical reporters, Gideon Levy and Amira Hass, which appear regularly on the English version of the liberal newspaper *Ha'Aretz* (www.haaretzdaily.com)

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Some months ago we opened the veganarchist straight edge **Mapakh** social center in Jaffa. Jaffa is a city bordering Tel Aviv (they are part of the same municipality), which has Arab and Jewish populations living together. The center was created by some veteran scenesters who decided to come back after squatting in Amsterdam for some time. Because squatting is virtually impossible in Israel, we had to rent a place and the center was finally opened on the summer of 2002. The place, besides being the home of four people, has an extensive library, a rehearsal room, and silk-screening facilities, and is working on a computer room and a recording studio. The building also serves as a place to hold political meetings and discussions. The idea behind this project is to try and incite and further encourage the much needed fusion between street politics and the notion of an anti-authoritarian community which is no longer part of greater Israeli society but more acting against it and its racist and capitalist goings-on. The place is 100% vegan straight edge.

Some months before Mapakh opened, an anarchist info-shop opened in Tel Aviv. The place is called **Salon Mazal** and has a libertarian library, along with books, zines, and music for sale. It also hosts meetings and evening screenings of films. If you're crazy enough to come over to Israel and are in Tel Aviv, that's the place to get informed about on-going activities, events, etc. Their address is 30 Montifiori St, just in the center of town. Their phone number is: 03-5601465.

Recently a book called ***It's All Lies*** was published, which compiles Israeli anarchist and radical left pamphlets and articles, originally published in Hebrew but all translated into English for this book. It's an excellent source for learning about anarchism and anti Zionism between the years 1970-2000. It's 90-plus pages, hardcover, huge (A3) format with glossy paper, and also includes a CD compilation of Israeli HC and punk bands, plus a short movie. It's available from AK Press or is $20 ppd from Mapakh, c/o Jonathan Pollak, 7 Ben Azariya Street, Tel Aviv 68023, Israel.

Sleep Furious is a relatively new band formed by people who have been in different local bands for the last ten years. They sound like a heavier version of Swiz with a female vocalist. They are about to record a full length and tracks for an upcoming Israeli HC 7".

Dir Yassin is probably the most veteran band among the DIY hardcore/ punk bands, releasing two 7"s (the third should be out by the end of the year) and touring western Europe in 1999 and Scandinavia this year, and also playing Israel this summer after more than two years. The future of the band is pretty uncertain at the moment. Check out their site: http://www.angelfire.com/il/deiryassin/

Nikmat Ha'Olalim is a bunch of 17-year-old kids playing raging hardcore. Most of the songs are fast but with a punky feeling to them, reminiscent of Neon Christ and Brother Inferior. The political lyrics are sometimes in Hebrew and sometimes in English. They are planning to record something soon, so watch out.

Amnon Itzhak was a political, in-your-face fast hardcore band from Haifa that managed to release a demo early on this year, but are about to break up. They'll still be recording more songs, which hopefully will appear on the planned Israeli hardcore 7" compilation. C.P.N. (also from Haifa) and Bar Minan (from Afula) also broke up, leaving a void in the hardcore thrash scene which hopefully will be filled soon.

Soon In Here is from the Kfar Saba area (north of Tel Aviv) and is becoming one of the most popular bands in the DIY scene here. They released a demo this summer and are planning to record again and to tour Europe next year. They play mosh-core but with a somewhat DIY/punk vibe to it.

There are many more bands here, playing street punk, pop punk, metal-core and melodic hardcore, but in this specific scene report we limited ourselves to those bands connected with the anti-war resistance. For more info about Israeli bands and hardcore/punk-related activities, check out both the Rockin' Rat (http://rockinrat.tripod.com/) and Gutzy (http://www.gutzy.com/) sites. You can also find Israeli hardcore punk bands (and other bullshit) at this FTP site: ftp://anonymous@israelmp3.home-ftp.net/. There is no steady venue for DIY shows, but there are shows starting to take place outside the three biggest cities (Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and Haifa), in places like Hertzlya, Kfar Saba, and Afula, which is obviously great. We just can hope that things will keep on improving scene-wise, and that the resistance to Sharon and the Israeli Occupation Force will increase.

—Federico Gomez

Everywhere is War: Philadelphia
By Mike McKee

As in many towns, many of us here in Philadelphia have been feeling overwhelmed in the face of everything that's gone down and how divorced any of our alleged representatives seem to be from their citizens.

• The group Campaign to End the Sanctions has hosted several demos, one particularly well attended one in collaboration with a Philadelphia Moslem organization.
• The Greater Camden Unity Coalition, from "just over the bridge" organized a protest at the bustling Cherry Hill Mall in New Jersey. Feel free to work out your own witty Jersey-pride joke here ("Yea Boss! No Bush!")
• A rather intense show of opposition against the war came from a collection of college students from the University of Pennsylvania and the immediate suburbs Haverford College. Following a dense, spirited march, the crowd took up outside the center city offices of Pennsylvania State Rep Rick Santorum. Some faction of the larger crowd took root in the Rep's office, demanding some answers and explanations about this ridiculous war. Their concise and reasonable questions addressed the realistic danger Iraq posed the average American citizen, the credibility of claims (seemingly only voiced by members of the Bush administration) of an Iraqi/Al Qaeda connection, the estimated loss of life of both combatants and civilians both American and Iraqi and the potentially disastrous effect military action might have in destabilizing the politically tumultuous Middle East. Deplorably, Santorum refused to even acknowledge their questions, failing to earn his own paycheck. Some 16 students were arrested in the peaceful demonstration when they refused to leave when Santorum tried to close his office. • Just days before Congress voted on Bush's plan for use of force, the suburbs' Villanova University (a Catholic school that's home to the cleverly named Holy Grounds Coffee Shop.. get it?) hosted members of Voices in the Wilderness, who spoke about their experiences in Iraq, the human effect of the sanctions and strategy in resisting the pending war.
• Every Friday at 5 pm, various peoples against the war congregate at the busy center city street corner of 11th & Market (home of the infamous "Gallery Mall," immortalized in song by The Fresh Prince) to distribute anti-war literature and maintain some visible opposition to those passersby.
• A.N.S.W.E.R., meanwhile, has helped organize several demonstrations and vigils, while the Philadelphia Ethical Society and the American Friends Service Committee have both hosted numerous teach-ins, seminars and speaking engagements dedicated to spreading awareness of the inconsistencies of the Bush administrations claims and the overall unacceptability of this kind of military action.
• A sizable group of punks have organized into a loose affinity group to join the many other Philadelphians who will take part in the national

convergence on October 26. Many of the same people are also in the process of organizing a big event for mid-November.

• Given the recent clampdown on alternative, unlicensed shows in the city and the city's long history of frowning upon dissent (ranging from banning skateboarding to dropping bombs on residential houses), listing details just wouldn't be appropriate. Those in the area, though, can count on a free or cheap concert featuring bands vocal against the war (think Rambo for starters), followed by an immediate convergence in an adjoining park and a raucous march through the bustling downtown business district. If you know how to find out about punk shows, you'll be able to find out about this. Sorry, officer.

So, Philadelphia hasn't been silent. Still, despite a rich history of sloganeering and a crowded present-tense of didactic posturing, The War has sent many would-be dissenters scurrying and confused.

Connecting with other human beings requires more patience, faith, and vulnerability than our point-n-click has us accustomed to.

I understand how a mass action or a protest might seem like pointless sport a million miles from anything that counts when the relationships in your own life seem to be falling the fuck apart. I understand it's dangerous to accept blame, to open up, to come clean, to share something beyond surface-level. I also understand that it's dangerous to come out and say you feel strongly about something. I understand it's hopelessly blasé to miss the social event of the year because the local anti-police brutality group is throwing a discussion night. I understand it's not cool to criticize the boys in the band, or sneak food from the music conference's after-party to the homeless woman outside.

What if we were to disabuse ourselves of the notion that settling for the less dangerous is acceptable? After all, it's not. Not if we're supposed to be punks, activists, the progressives, the future (as Whitney Houston suggests), or—quite simply—effective human beings.

Most of us can admit that a lot of the time we're just a break-up or a firing or a pregnancy away from flying directly off the proverbial handle, *Network* style—wrenching off neckties, slamming our fists, screaming, "I'm mad as hell and I ain't gonna take it anymore!"

There's no shame or undue compromise in the little, quirky coping mechanisms we all come up with to get through the days—whether it's finding some laughs in the latest episode of *MTV Cribs,* the guilty pleasures of Missy Misdemeanor Elliot, escaping to *Temptation Island,* or even blowing off the politically correct furies circling your head and enjoying a cup of Starbucks. But when it gets right down to it, when "it's time to meet your maker," how much solace will be found in the irony of mullet jokes, the keen Swedish efficiency of an Ikea living room, or being able to brag "I was in the right... but, fuck, I miss her."

As Kathleen puts it, "Resist Psychic Death." There's a War going on and any idea we have of "entitlement" towards neutrality, or the luxury of not caring is bullshit that is sure to sting us all down the road. The obscene theft of human life and dignity currently being executed in Afghanistan and Iraq is being done in your name (and with a significant portion of the paychecks you're always trying to make last till the next).

When you hear about that anti-war vigil this week, I hope you'll go, and I hope you'll try to work things out with that friend you should've kept in your life.

Really, Generation Y—we've got delicate work to do.

Remain Engaged,

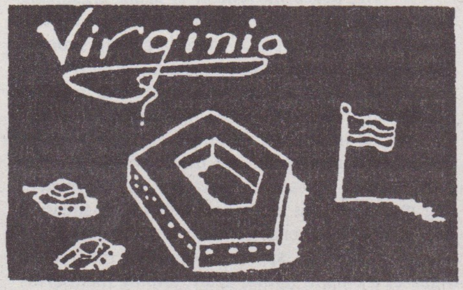
Mike McKee
mike@cheap-art.com

For information about the sit-in at PA Rep. Rick Santorum's office, visit: (http://www.phillyimc.org/article.pl?sid=02/10/05/0623231&mode=thread).

For other information on Philadelphia-related events and activism, visit www.defenestrator.org.

In other Philadelphia news, I'm excited to announce that it seems those deemed "the kids" have won a recent victory for alternative, all-ages shows with the City's corrupt Department of Licenses & Inspections off the backs of Sean Agnew and R5 Productions (the city's largest promoter of all ages events at non-commercial venues). A cherished venue, The First Unitarian Church, is now hosting shows again, having gone head to head with the L&I Dep't.

Sorry again, Officer.



By Basla Andolsun, photos by Saifa Durkee

Recently the Women's Studies and African American Studies departments at Virginia Commonwealth University co-sponsored a speech by transgender activist Leslie Feinberg. Feinberg addressed the crowded auditorium on the topic of "what is transgender?" To my surprise and delight, much of Feinberg's speech centered around the commonality of oppression among various groups and the importance of inter-group solidarity in combating that oppression. Feinberg suggested that for any lasting, system-wide change to take place each group must struggle both for its own rights and for the rights of all oppressed peoples. The conclusion of the touching and eloquent speech focused on the importance of solidarity with the people of Iraq in opposition to Bush's war.

Feinberg's speech made me realize that what is most exciting to me about the anti-war movement in Richmond right now is that it draws its support from such a broad base. Richmonders from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds representing a number of interests have joined together in opposition to the war. As a movement composed of GLTB rights activists, anti-racists, animal rights activists, anarchists, feminists, various student and political groups, religious organizations, and a large number of unaffiliated individuals, I see both a strong existing movement and a great potential for growth.

One of the strengths that comes from the breadth of Richmond's anti-war movement is that a variety of perspectives and opinions are brought to the table. Groups like Pax Christi, a pacifist Catholic group comprised mostly of middle-aged people who have been working against US aggression since Vietnam, have a different perspective and different tactics from younger activists in groups like Food Not Bombs or the campus group Free Palestine Now. Granted, this can sometimes be a little hectic when participants at an event have two or more very different opinions on which tactics should be employed. However these differences can also translate into a layered, multi-faceted movement with the potential to reach an increased number of people.

A variety of community groups, student groups, religious organizations, and individuals have organized anti-war activities in Richmond. Each of these participants in the anti-war movement has a differing perspective, but they share a common goal—no new/increased war against Iraq. The following list of activities is not exhaustive, but it speaks to the variety of strategies Richmonders are using.

• On Thursday, September 19, a peaceful anti-war demonstration was held on the campus of VCU. Between 80-100 students, faculty, and members of the community attended. Demonstrators held signs and banners and chanted while passersby perused an information table, signed petitions, and added their names to an anti-war email list-serve. Local newspapers and TV stations covered the demo. Participants have since been holding demonstrations every Thursday.

• Members of Food Not Bombs, along with six or seven supporting organizations, are holding an anti-war march on November 9. They hope to draw hundreds of participants to Virginia's state capitol to march in opposition to the war. Organizers anticipate peaceful acts of civil disobedience.

• The *Richmond Free Press,* a free weekly newspaper with mostly African-American staff and readership, has been consistently running articles, cartoons, editorials, and pictures with anti-war themes.

• *War Times,* an anti-war periodical, is distributed at various locations throughout Richmond.

• The streets of Richmond are currently peppered with wheat-pasted signs that say "Stop Killing Iraqis" and there has been talk among individuals of acts such as banner drops and sidewalk chalking.

• The Richmond chapter of Women's Advocates To Terminate Sexism (sister group of WATTS in DC) is orchestrating a peace quilt project. They are gathering squares designed by people across the country to sew into quilts. The quilts will be used in demos or may be given to symbolic figures. For info or to donate a patch write s2bkando@atlas.vcu.edu.

• Students at the University of Richmond held an

open mic forum to debate a war with Iraq. Well over 100 students participated. Students at VCU are planning a similar event.

• Members of Pax Christi organized petition drives and hand delivered petitions with hundreds of signatures to members of congress. They also regularly participate in prayer services with other pacifist religious organizations and are in the process of renting a billboard to advertise an anti-war message.

• A number of Richmonders participated in the anti-war march in DC on September 29 and carpooled or took busses to the march on October 26.

Richmond is a fairly small city, and it makes me proud that there is so much anti-war activity going on here. When I go to an event sponsored by the Sexual Minority Student Alliance and I hear people planning an anti-war action, or when I see an elementary school-aged African American girl passing out flyers for an anti-war march with her parents, or I get an email saying that several churches are co-hosting a prayer vigil for the people of Iraq, it makes me realize why I like this little city so much. While I'll be the first to admit that Richmond is far from perfect, one of its strengths is the number of people here who are concerned with peace and justice, both for the people of Iraq and for all oppressed groups.

While I was listening to Leslie Feinberg's speech the other week I took a few glances around the crowded auditorium. It struck me that people I see in a variety of contexts had gathered there. Feminists, GLBT, peace activists, anti-racists, Food Not Bombers, anarchists, and a whole host of other activists were present. As Fienberg talked about the importance of solidarity in supporting the people of Iraq, I thought about how many of these people have been participating in one way or another in anti-war activities and a score of other activities as well. I left the speech with the feeling of energy that comes from being part of an organized and active community. It is in the spirit of a worldwide community that I will continue to work against a war on Iraq and to do my best to work in solidarity with all oppressed peoples.

Iceland Feels the War Scare
By Siggi Pönk

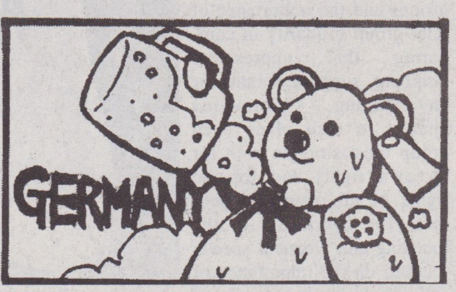
This morning the police removed an American flag from the flag-pole outside the house of government here in Reykjavík. On the flag was scrawled the word "Pereat." It is a Latin curse and translates as "down with it." People see it as a mockery of the Icelandic minister of foreign affairs and prime minister's willingness to support everything and anything the Bush regime says and does about terrorism. The opposition in government wants the Icelandic State to take a stand against the war on Iraq, but they are also part of government, so it is up to the people to voice their opinion. This flag joke was one voice. Every speech Bush makes is presented here on every media channel. The public is worried. Most people find the emperor a scary figure.

A peace movement has been active here ever since Iceland joined NATO. That day is the only day in Iceland's history when there were riots in Reykjavík. The American army has been here since World War II, always accompanied by strong public opposition. Public interest in resistance has dwindled since the years of Thatcher and Reagan's nuclear war scare. Only a couple of hundred individuals showed up for demonstrations this spring when NATO leaders had their meeting here. Iceland is a cold and windy place sometimes, and it was on that day. Mostly, the Icelandic media was not interested in what the peace activists had to say—they see NATO as peace activists. A local punk set up a two-day festival entitled "Fuck NATO," but the kids had fun without putting much thought into the real meaning behind the festival. The police used the violence of the Schengen European police force treaty to keep suspicious people from flying over. Officials expressed their concerns about "professional protestors and rioters" who they believed would storm this little country.

The peace movement is again organizing some bigger demonstrations for November. We feel that support for the peace cause is getting stronger here. A seminar organized by the peace movement at the same time as the NATO meeting included many interesting speakers from various peace movements in various countries. Again, there was little public interest and the media were not interested either. The speakers were very informative and made we who are worried about the situation concerning US foreign policy even more worried.

A Danish speaker described the typical signs of a empire falling apart; arming themselves to the teeth, cutting down necessities in public services to support war, making allies with threats, etc. The US has all those signs. No punk in Iceland wants to be in your shoes. Maybe we only get the bad news about the Orwellian state of mind people over there are being pushed into, with a mixture of patriotism and paranoia. We don't know. Best wishes.

Siggi
punknurse@helviti.com



Bombs of Peace from Germany
By Swen

The last time the US was close to military intervention in Iraq, in 1991, you could speak of a big protest movement on the streets in Germany. I remember it well. In the early 1990s the wheels stopped turning; hundreds of thousands were demonstrating. "No Blood for Oil" was the battle cry. Everybody was shocked to see that the biggest military force in the world was planning to go against what we would call a sandbox dictator and the Iraqi people. Many people had fears of this conflict spreading like wildfire across the region and the world. A broad coalition of trade unions, political opposition, church leaders, other non-parliamentary forces, and antifascists stood together to protest publicly. Even the yearly German carnival in February (similar to Halloween but celebrated with big parades) was cancelled because nobody dared to celebrate in the face of upcoming violence. The terror spread by the USA in Vietnam and South America to protect its economic interests was still very present to everyone. Also, the connection between the oil interests and the military action of the old Bush was too obvious.

Our government was at this point still under control of the chancellor Helmut Kohl and his conservative right wing party, which had been in control of democratic powers for twelve years. This government was very loyal to America for obvious reasons: The reintegration/reunification of the former DDR (German Democratic Republic) was affected by the tension between US imperialism and the Soviet bloc. After all, this German government owed its survival to the East German voters, who believed the promise of wealth for all. The protest of the population from western Germany moved to the streets. Even the pro-government media did little against the protest and only cautiously took a pro-American stance.

After the assaults on September 11, we can observe a couple of reactions in Germany: Under the shock of the first, very expressive TV images, many people were shocked and showed solidarity with the victims. The media used this, along with the insight that terrorists were to blame, to generate a mood that even made the new green-red government talk of unbound solidarity with the USA. This unquestioning support was seen negatively by the left-thinking population and by most punks. When it was clear that the US would start military activities in Afghanistan (with or without help from other partners), the support of bigger parts of the population reversed. This was actually not only the case in left wing, but also in right wing extremist circles.

Anti-American prejudice in the activist punk scene seemed to be set in stone. American patriotism had been sitting heavily in our stomachs for a while before this. Because patriotism is closely bundled with right wing extremism, many moderate street punk-circles avoid this topic. Instead, people held on to the judgment that Americans do make really good punk music, but otherwise are idiots who have been calibrated to US government views since childhood, pledging allegiance to the flag instead of to education. In the face of the patriotic shock that took hold of the US, many feared the worst. And glances at homepages of bands like the Bodies or Reducers SF attested to these fears (concerning groups of punks in the US) just as much as "American Pride" tours of bands with patriotic street punk backgrounds.

Support for the US government is equivalent to a commitment to geofascism in international politics. I view fascism, in this context, as putting economic interests over human lives. And as sad as it is, with all the people who have died in the World Trade Center, it was clear from the beginning that the war in Afghanistan would create even more victims, who are just as innocent (but poorer and of a different faith). This proved to be true, but TV images of common (mass) graves were not aired repeatedly. Also, the media showed little of the involvement of US soldiers in mass killings of Taliban fighters. Since this information is nevertheless accessible, I put (and many agree on this issue) American patriots into the same corner with German patriots—the right wing extremist corner! The links between American patriots in the punk scene, like Vulture Rock and Punkcore (just a few examples that can be traced through the internet by everyone) can't lead to other conclusions.

I feel sick (and again, many people feel this way), now, when I see an American flag.

Especially when we see how the Bush-government is openly making efforts to maintain an exception from international rights for themselves. The international court for the law of nations cannot judge US-war criminals, which again has us assuming terrible things for the upcoming war in Iraq. Also the refusal to accept UN-resolutions and the single option of leading the military strike against Iraq is fearsome. Since WWII, international US politics has cost 12-16 million human lives. How many people live in Iraq? About 23.5 million. Even if Saddam Hussein does have weapons capable of mass destruction—who has made him strong enough to lead the war against Iran? Does George Bush have weapons of mass destruction? Are there any UN-inspectors who are allowed to control the doings of the US economic global players worldwide? I hear Saddam Hussein's regime is abusing human rights. In the US, kids and the mentally handicapped are executed. Shit, there is no support for the military US action in the German punk scene whatsoever.

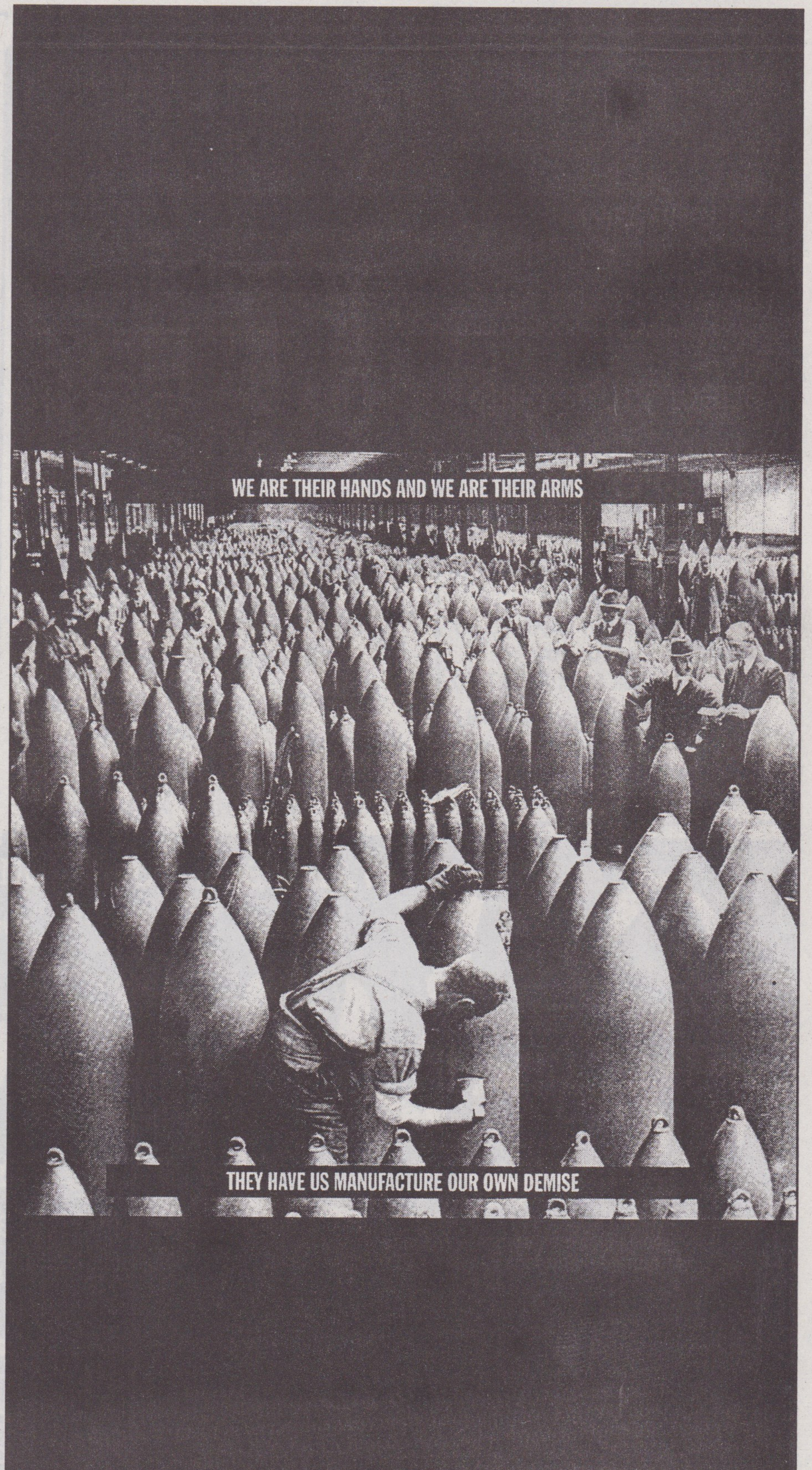
Even if there were such a thing as moral justification, the fear of a second Israel/Palestine conflict would outweigh it. Nevertheless, there are only few people on the streets in Germany this time, while hundreds of thousands are protesting in England. Why is that so? We are all very surprised to see our government stick to its refusal of support for the US or UN-intervention in Iraq. Yes, fuck it, it is unbelievable. No punk would have had the idea of expecting anything like this from Schröder or Fischer. At the moment, there is no reason to go into the streets. Who goes to protest in support of his government? Everybody is waiting for the German government to give in after all—and then the protest on the streets would be big.

It is not only the disaffirmation for war, which plays an important role here. No—in spite of what German politicians and German media try to convey—there is resentment against the American way of life in a large part of the population. This is not limited to the punk scene alone, but is mirrored in all levels of the population. Sympathy with the 9-11 attacks was not only felt by Muslims in Germany. Many people do understand that the killings in Vietnam and South America have produced people who want to fight back and make use of their right to revenge, which has only been granted to the US so far. And one thing is for sure—wherever the US intervenes through military action or makes use of their influence to further an America-friendly opposition, regions have fallen into imbalance for decades at the expense of their populations.

I do not believe that the Arab world will tolerate US interference much longer. It could very well be that there will be more than the oil fields burning soon. The war in the Middle East between Israel and Palestine shows just how horrible it could become everywhere in the near future. And who will have an advantage from such a war? For me as a European, the next question is, who will be the next on the list after Eurasia has been conquered by the US?

Alright, this was a brief insight from the German punk scene. Written from a gut feeling, sure, with a lot of contempt for the American way of life, but with respect to all the people who are opposing the current state of affairs in the US. Especially in the last ten years, when punk seemed to have lost its energy and become too palatable to the masses, it is good to see that there still are punks who see more than just the music. Go ahead and become fat and old, but don't let anybody tell you what to think or say.

Swen
swen@plastic-bomb.de



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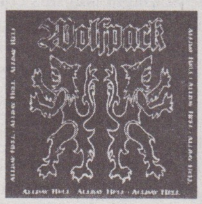

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Reading for Democracy, or How We Learned to (Tough) Love the News

By Mimi Nguyen and Mark Murrmann.
Illustration by Peter Kuper.

In the war on terrorism, and in the push for a military coup in Iraq, US Americans have been told that democracy is both our finest natural impulse and our greatest national resource. It is so pure, so scared, that it is outside the political. It is supposedly what sustains us, and what endangers us. In the national psychological imagination, others are *jealous* and democracy must be protected against all harm.

But this appeal to democracy has taken the form of an antipolitical cliché, short-circuiting its possibilities for a collective, critical engagement about what it means and how we activate this ethic. There is no nuance, no contest, no historical memory in this appeal to democracy. The reductive psychologization of the political (for instance, in the suggestion that jealousy is the root cause of all protest) sidesteps the democratic practices that are political in nature. Instead of democratic processes and participation in the necessarily gritty dialogues about the political conditions that give shape to our lives, this popular version is a democracy which foregrounds the closure of disagreement or meaningful conflict in the name of its conservation and protection.

Following queer political theorist Lauren Berlant, we might call this condition a "hygienic governmentality." She describes this as "a ruling bloc's dramatic attempt to maintain its hegemony by asserting that an abject population threatens the common good and must be rigorously governed and monitored by all sectors of society." She continues:

> Especially horrifying are the ways the ruling bloc solicits mass support for such "governing": by using abjected populations as exemplary of all obstacles to national life; by wielding images and narratives of a threatened "good life" that a putative "we" have known; by promising relief from the struggles of the present through a felicitous image of a national future; and by claiming that, because the stability of the core image is the foundation of the narratives that characterize an intimate and secure national society, the nation must at all costs protect this image of a way of life, even against the happiness of some of its own citizens.

The apparatus of national culture mobilizes the comic-book politics of George W. Bush to manufacture a set of "core national values" and an "appropriate" response—"America Under Attack," "America Strikes Back," "America: Open For Business." The imagined innocence of US citizens prior to the attacks and the "American way of life" are cited as victims in this war, never mind that many have never experienced America as a land of plenty, or a place of liberty—and that in this period of recession, racism, and reduced rights, many fewer will. That such representations and regulatory practices—of America, of Arabs and Muslims, of "bravery," of the nature of democracy, of the West and the Rest—go unchallenged even as Congress passes retroactive tax cuts for multinationals, the Bush administration rejects an International Criminal Court and pushes to expand the "war on terrorism" across the world, and the Justice Department undermines the Constitutional rights of citizens, is the ongoing crisis.

Between academic blacklists and high school suspensions, between news-media events splashing "America Strikes Back" across our television screens and popular culture reproducing endless montages of picket fences, families, and flags, the national discourse regarding 9-11 in particular has produced a certain set of organizing images and importantly *a certain kind of ideal citizen*. This ideal citizen—a fantasy in her own right—is defined by her passive participation in an imagined democracy. That is, she willingly forfeits her "right" to participate as a critical citizen in a working democracy for a sentimental image of community and unity.

Since 9-11 we have heard declarations of uncritical support across the narrow spectrum of available public discourse, such as, "Even though I am a devout Democrat, I believe that what the nation needs now is unity in hunting down the killers, and not dissent. I am an American."

The statement "I am an American" is both an affirmation of identification with the nation but also an implicit line in the sand, a move toward exclusion. Clearly those who do not wish to affirm their American-ness in the same manner are therefore un-American; it is a "love it or leave it" proposal which leaves little room to critically participate in the democratic process because somehow, *the democratic process is now understood as itself un-American*.

The limits of this sort of sentimental citizenship are clear—what qualifies a person as a citizen is *not* her ability to act in the public sphere as a critical participant in the democratic process. Instead her duty is located in her ability to emit certain patriotic *feelings* (and of course, to shop) as the proper expression of national collectivity. These feelings are heralded as a citizenry's best effort to "heal the nation," and are both generated and regulated by a national apparatus of discourses, institutions, organizations, laws, administrative measures, celebrity statements, et cetera. It is forcefully suggested that to feel *differently* is to "let the terrorists win."

The limits of such sentimental and therapeutic discourses for political dialogue are firmly in place. A recent news program featured angry email messages from viewers suggesting that politicians who are concerned about disappearing civil liberties would "feel differently" if they had lost family and friends in 9-11, and that voicing such concerns is an "invalidation" and a "betrayal" of those who died in the attacks. Those who lost their loved ones also in the World Trade Center and Pentagon but have publicly denounced the war in Afghanistan waged in the names of their dead are treated as incidental, delusional, or otherwise bearing all sorts of "unnatural" or "impure" political feelings.

To borrow from the authors of *Materializing Democracy*, those of us who demand a political culture of radical democracy must interrogate the following:

- the tendency to reduce democracy to a sacred prepolitical or postpolitical space emptied of debate or dialogue
- cultural practices in our popular culture that influence the loss of historical memory about democratic political processes
- the structures that depoliticize what it means to be a citizen
- how modes of feelings such as sentimentality or vengeance block or reduce our understanding of democracy

With these in mind, reading the news critically becomes one way to understand the practices, beliefs, and conditions that activate or block democracy's possibilities. The following is a guide to some news media outlets and how to read them through a critical lens. There are some clear guidelines, for instance, where is a story positioned (on the front page above the fold, or buried in the middle of the business section)? What editorial decisions have shaped this story? Who is being represented, who is made representative of a group or population, and to what effect? How do we receive information about other people's lives or a political issue? The politics of information retrieval force us to recognize that these stories are not facts but representations, and that language fundamentally structures our comprehension of political and social realities. We have to question the position of the informant; our received knowledge is *situated* knowledge, produced by anthropologists and missionaries, governmental officials and military sources, for institutional and/or instrumental purposes in situations often marked by uneven relations of power. Where are the other accounts of the story? What if there are none, and what would that mean? This doesn't necessarily indicate that the information we receive from these invested perspectives is useless, it just means we have to surround this information with a historical and social context to understand where it came from.

We've included a wide range of news sources, from independent websites to mainstream newspapers, to provide a general overview of how to read critically and comparatively across media. Nonetheless we have largely excluded the "usual suspects;" for instance, we did not include Indymedia.org because of the lack of accountability. Indymedia.org may be a great source for up-to-the-minute accounts of mass actions, but it is woefully short on analysis.

The problem inherent in lists such as this is that a lot of good things get left out—sometimes because of space constraints, sometimes because of the writer's shithole of a memory. Anyway, this is less an end-all list than a starting off point. Though many of the publications here are giants, they are all worth a second look. It is difficult to build an effective opposition to *anything* without knowing the facts as they are being discussed by all sides. When entering a political debate, often the facts you find in these sources, for better or worse, are those being referenced. No publication is perfect, but if you know how to read well-written, well reported news, you can start gleaning information that lives between the lines, behind the scenes. What's more, if you simply fall back on "All major news is full of lies, so I only read alternative news," you will quickly find yourself missing a large part of the picture.

Newspapers

Despite what you might think, despite predictions of doom and gloom, the

newspaper still provides the beating heart of the daily news cycle. While many local papers fill their pages with local feel-good fluff pieces and chopped-up AP stories, some of the national papers provide a good deal of information about national and international news. Often it takes a while to really know what—and who—to look for in a paper. While many papers will run stories on the official White House line in response to a given event, the better papers will also include more in depth stories that scrutinize what is being said and who is saying it and why they are saying it *now*.

That said, there are a few newspapers that stand out for their international news coverage and for sometimes taking a more critical look at the news.

The **Washington Post** (www.washingtonpost.com) still has shining moments of brilliance, such as on October 22, 2002, when they ran a front page article detailing how George Bush plays loose with facts. Is this news? You and I both knew this, right? The information has been there for months. But for a story like that to appear on the front page of the *Washington Post* is a big fucking deal. For better or worse, people (the general public) take stuff like this more seriously when it comes from a news instrument like the *Post* more than if it comes from a predictably leftist publication. Now if that article could have run in the *Cleveland Plains-Dealer*, *the Des Moines Register*, *the Indianapolis Star*, and the *Denver Post*, it would have been even better. Ted Rall's cartoons can be found on the editorial page of the online version of the *Post*. EJ Dionne, Richard Cohen, and Mary McGory are the columnists to watch for.

More than any other publication in the world, the front page of the *New York Times* sets the tone for what newspapers, magazines, and TV news will cover in a given day. Go directly to the source. Aside from their news coverage, the **New York Times** (www.nytimes.com) has some of the best photographers and use of photos of any newspaper in the world. The Sunday edition of the *Times* has an often refreshing opinion section call "Week In Review," not to mention the *New York Times Magazine*, which features quality in-depth reporting.

For issues pertaining to Asia and Latin America, the **Los Angeles Times** (www.latimes.com) has the best coverage of any paper in the US. They have a good bunch of editorial columnists, including Robert Scheer, Arianna Huffington, and Paul Krugman (all are syndicated to other papers as well).

If you really want a different perspective on the news (for those of us stuck here in the US), get out of the United States and pick up a copy of the **Independent**, the **Guardian** (www.guardian.co.uk), the **Observer** (UK) or just about any other paper from a different country that you can read. It's amazingly refreshing and often depressing. Better newspaper stands carry these papers, but you can read them online as well.

Of the weeklies available around the country, the **Village Voice** (www.villagevoice.com) still reigns supreme. Be sure to read James Ridgeway's columns about going-ons in Washington. He often taps into stories that are highly under-reported, or that you will read about a week or two later in one of the major dailies.

Magazines

Since this article focuses primarily on big media, we're gonna stick to that here. Yes, there area a number of magazines that offer an "alternative" voice. They range from sloppy regurgitation of worn-out protest slogans and pamphlets to insightful, intelligent points of view on subjects you may or may not have thought about. Check out **Utne Reader**, **AdBusters**, **Mother Jones**, and **Extra** (published by Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting [FAIR]).

Harpers is a consistent source of intellectual dissent, especially since 9-11. Editor Lewis Lapham has dedicated every lengthy, erudite editorial in the last year to a critical response to the Bush administration.

Newsweek has published some amazing articles in the last year, including an exposé on allegations that the US-allied Northern Alliance deliberately suffocated and starved hundreds of captured Taliban prisoners in cargo holds; a historical overview of "how we created Saddam Hussein," detailing US support of the dictator since 1962, chemical weapons against Iranian and Kurdish civilians with US blessing; and an interview with Nelson Mandela, who charges that the Bush administration is the world's most dangerous nation-state.

If you don't have time to read a lot of papers from around the world, but are interested in what is being said about in countries around the globe, the **World Press Review** should be added to your list. The editors of *World Press Review* read and condense articles on the top news stories for a particular period of time.

Get past the uppity New York tone (present in many of these publications) and you will find some amazing writing in the **New Yorker**. More than just good writing, the *New Yorker* lets its writers stretch out, covering articles with a length and depth not seen much these days. The same can be said for the **New York Review of Books**, which has a more dense, academic tone. But you will find people writing about events, politics and people in there who in a few months time wind up dominating headlines.

And surely you know about the **Nation**, right? Pick up a copy if you haven't done so in a while.

Specialty Publications

If you really want to get insight on a particular area of coverage, read what the pros read. That said, if you want to get the scoop on the inner going-ons of Congress, check out **Roll Call**, a newspaper (also available online) that just covers the Hill. Definitely not for everyone.

In a similar vein, ABCNews publishes an online weblog called **The Note** which basically breaks down all the behind-the-scenes political action in Washington, DC and around the country.

Internet-only

Everything above is available online. There are a few websites that exist as solely on the web.

Salon.com is an on-line staple, featuring some really stellar investigative reporting on corporate misdeeds, political concerns, and cultural controversies.

Buzzflash.com is a clearinghouse of political news items and editorials. With a minimal look designed to deliver the goods, every story or article is linked with the publication date and a Buzzflash headline guaranteed to be full of snark.

Common Dreams (commondreams.org) is another clearinghouse, featuring editorial essays culled from multiple and diverse publications. Common Dreams also has an extensive list of links to news items, news agencies, and progressive organizations. As a bonus, there are the regular "Ari and I" features, in which a dogged member of the press corps regularly confronts the Bush administration's spokesperson Ari Fleischer on the important political issues.

AlterNet is an alternative newswire service, featuring essays and editorials from an "alternative" perspective. What this means is varied.

A new feature of the popular search engine, **GoogleNews** acts as a constantly updated roundup of the day's news. Grabs stories from websites around the world.

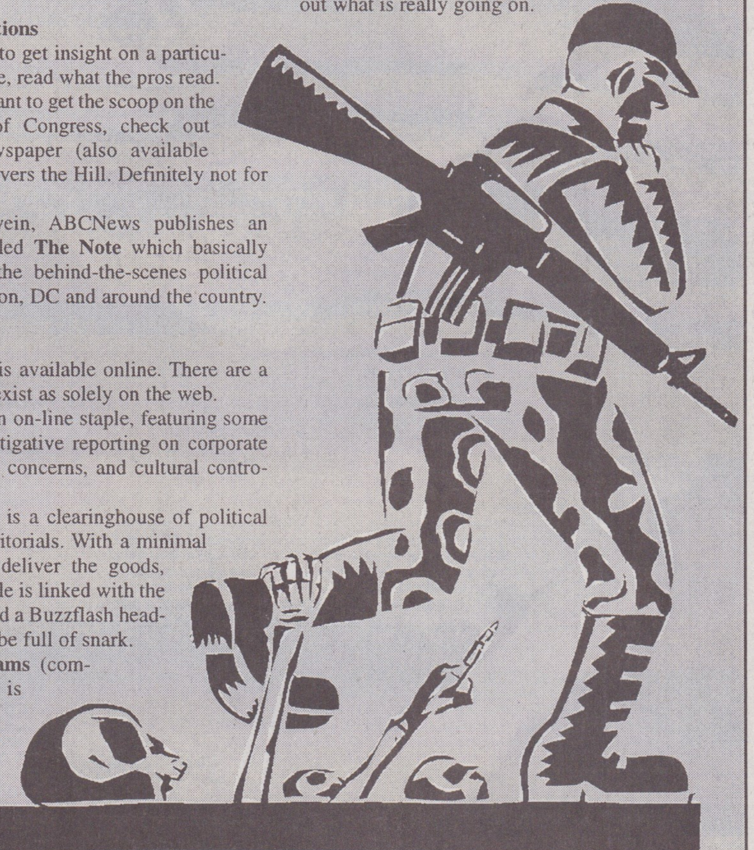
Radio/TV

Radio and television isn't completely without merit. **NPR** remains one of the best options on the radio. If you can get it, BBC (try it on the web: www.bbc.co.uk) can be a refreshing alternative. And if you are really lucky, your local community radio station will carry **Free Speech Radio**.

On TV, it's much more hit and miss. Did you know that **Chris Matthews**, host of *Hardball* on MSNBC, is very much against the war in Iraq? It's true. His show has become a cable news oasis of somewhat rational thought. Likewise, **Donahue** is the "liberal view" on cable news. Sometimes Donahue falls into the bad liberal character trait of being afraid people will think he's *too* liberal, so he brings on Ralph Reed and Pat Buchanan. Ugh.

On PBS, **NOW**, hosted by Bill Moyers, and **Frontline** both remind us what quality TV news reporting could and should be like. No shouting heads. No quickie clips of pet adoption centers or seniors having a "prom."

Yes, there is a lot of total crap out there in terms of news coverage. But the good stuff is out there too. You just have to know where to look for it and how to read even the crap to find out what is really going on.



The problem is not how to get rid of the enemy;
but rather, how to get rid of the last victor.
For what is a victor but one that has learned that violence works?
Who will teach <u>him</u> a lesson?

--Niccolo Tucci, 1945

Illustration by Lydia Crumbly

WAR ON IRAQ?

By Bryan Alft.

War on Iraq? Appalling, but not unexpected. The complete lack of understanding of other nations and the complexities of geopolitics has been a hallmark of the Bush administration's fanatical agenda from the start. Since George W. Bush stepped into the White House, his administration has illustrated an arrogance unrivaled in the international community. The Bush administration has been playing fast and lose with international diplomacy with little concern for the aftereffects, and never taking their eye off of their imperial ambitions.

One sure sign of this arrogant ambition came when they pulled out of negotiations for the Kyoto protocol on global warming. With little consideration, George W. turned his back on years of effort by the world community despite the fact that the United States is the greatest producer of the gases that contribute to global warming.

George W.'s next move was to throw out the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with Russia. In a matter of weeks, the Bush administration cast aside a treaty that was the next key step in years of work to achieve lasting nuclear disarmament on the planet. In its place, Bush ratified an overly-simplified treaty with Russia which includes no oversight and little assurance that thousands of nuclear warheads held by the two countries will ever be eliminated.

Perhaps George W.'s most arrogant foreign policy decision has been to undermine the International Criminal Court by demanding that no Americans be prosecuted by the court. The Bush administration simply decided that it would rather not be a part of a court that would bring the world's leaders to some kind of accountability if they broke international law. As George W. would have it, the US is above the law.

Of course, the world community has done little to protest George W.'s actions. Being the world's only superpower, with the largest and most technically advanced military, the US is hard to oppose. When a bully gets his way, he is bound to push for more. And so goes the US's relationship with the world.

Most shocking is the degree of fanaticism that lies beneath the ideals and policy goals of the Bush administration. Many key decision-makers in the administration began planning a move on Iraq even before Bush was in office. Evidence of this includes a study written by Assistant Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz and Vice President Dick Cheney's Chief of Staff Lewis Libby for the conservative think-tank Project for a New American Century.[1] This study outlined an attack on Iraq that would bring "regime change" three months prior to George W.'s presidency, and cites Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein as justification for a substantial American force in the Persian Gulf.[2] The study's authors actually go so far as to describe a 'blueprint for maintaining global US preeminence' and refer to US armed forces as 'the calvary on the new American frontier.'[3] This imperial world view was surely influential as the Bush administration prepared their new American Security Strategy.

This new security strategy takes the aggressive tone of George W.'s eager advisors. The focus of the strategy is maintaining military supremacy over the planet and "reverses a long American tradition of contempt for unprovoked attacks."[4] The strategy does this by advocating preemptive attacks to halt any challenges to US supremacy. In truth, this strategy, "trades deterrence for preemption—in plain English, aggression."[5]

The problem for George W. and his cronies is that the rest of the world isn't interested in an expansion of US world dominance. What further complicates the Bush administration's vision are the very tenants of international peacemaking and coalition-building over the last 50 years, which directly contradict their new strategy. Unfortunately for George W., the US spent the better part of last century helping to develop institutions to ensure peaceful and rational resolutions to problems. Changing this legacy may be beyond his abilities. In fact, this newly charted US foreign policy strategy—and George W.'s plan for Iraq—violates the very charter of the UN. As powerful as the US is, without the support of the UN, the US would have a hard time in Iraq.

In an attempt to force his way around the objections of other UN member nations, George W. has made his proposal for war on Iraq a referendum on the UN itself.[6] The Bush administration is taking advantage of the fact that Iraq has ignored or violated UN resolutions since the end of the first Gulf War. The failure by the UN to respond to these violations has weakened the UN's position.

So, "Bush framed the debate (over Iraq) in a way that makes it hard for him to lose it. This isn't about the US. It's about whether a dictator can flaunt UN resolutions with impunity."[7] If UN nations say "no" to this question, then they must support the war. And, with UN support, George W. is able to "shift some of the blame for 'warmongering' onto the UN, as a duty of the global community rather than as US aggression."[8] If the UN says "yes," a nation can get away with what Iraq has, then the UN subverts their own credibility (Richard Blow).

This forced referendum aside, Article 1, Section 4 of the UN Charter is clear on its prohibition of preemptive war: "All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state..."

This is a key piece of international law that has prevented countless wars over the years. "At stake is not just the prospect of a devastating war but the very legitimacy of an international system built over the past century that—despite its failings—has created at least some semblance of global order and stability."[9]

But the Bush administration doesn't seem to care about this history. The UN is a barrier to US self-interest and generally seems to be regarded with hostility unless it can be used to US advantage. The Bush administration has "a myopic fixation on the unproven fears about the capabilities and intentions of Iraq, Iran, and North Korea."[10] Furthermore, the Bush administration, "with little debate and no justification... has overturned a fifty-year tradition of seeking allies and building coalitions in support of foreign policy."[11] Instead of first attempting to search out all peaceful means to resolve conflict with Iraq, the Bush administration jumped to an aggressive, ill-considered threat of force.

The tunnel vision of the Bush administration has meant that they have heeded few of the many doubts and warnings expressed by those around them. Many reports have surfaced of severe reservations among US military and Intelligence officials about the proposal to attack Iraq, not to mention the objections voiced my most of the rest of the world or the doubts of the American people.

The ramifications of attacking Iraq are dangerous and wide-reaching. Of greatest concern may be that such actions will weaken the world community by increasing tensions while discrediting the few civilized means by which nations negotiate and maintain peace. For instance, one result of a US attack on Iraq is that Saddam Hussein could use his few remaining weapons to attack Israel. Israel, a nation armed with nuclear weapons, has already stated that it will respond to an Iraqi attack. Such an action by Israel could draw other Arab nations into the conflict and lead to a larger Middle East war.

A report by the CIA seems to support the possibility of Iraq striking out in desperation. In this report, the CIA stated that "Should Saddam conclude that a US-led attack could no longer be deterred, he probably would become much less constrained in adopting terrorist actions" and that he, "might decide that the extreme step of assisting Islamic terrorists in conducting a WMD (weapons of mass destruction) attack against the US would be his last chance to exact vengeance..."[12] In other words, aggression on the part of the US government could drive Saddam Hussein and the Al Qaeda terrorists—two long-time enemies—into an alliance against the US.

Even if this alliance never occurred, attacking Iraq would certainly distract from the war on terrorism. Even worse, war with Iraq could actually rejuvenate Al Qaeda's

efforts. Attacking Iraq with little regard for international law would most likely enrage Arabs and Muslims worldwide. Iraq could become a rallying call that could boost recruitment of terrorist members and make the US less secure.

Most damaging to world peace and stability could be the very precedent the Bush administration would establish by attacking Iraq. Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger called Bush's new security doctrine "revolutionary" because it discards all the traditional tenets of international law as well as the UN and NATO charters.[13] Kissinger warned: "It is not in the American national interest to establish pre-emption as a universal principle available to every nation."[14]

By abandoning the concept of deterrence, George W. is making it easier for nations to act aggressively without the fear of international pressure or opposition. Deterrence works because it makes enemies hesitant to attack each other for fear of the response to their actions by the rest of the world. Nations are instead forced to find other means of resolving their tensions. If it is suddenly acceptable to act out against other nations who you suspect may someday threaten you, then the gates are open to endless bloody possibilities: Russia can attack Georgia for harboring Chechen rebels, China can attack Taiwan for having weaponry pointed at them, India can attack the Kashmir region and Pakistan for the actions of armed separatist rebels… the list goes on an on.

Faced with all the uncertain dangers that arise from the decision to attack Iraq, one would have to ask, "What the hell are these people thinking?" As incredible as it may seem, George W. and his cronies have a great deal to gain in exchange for taking such risks with the future of the planet. Here is a short list:

War=votes!

The election is less than a month away, and what better way to secure votes than to start a war? Control of both houses of Congress is up for grabs and strong support for George W. will probably translate into a strong showing for Republicans in Congressional races. Besides, what will make the Democrats look more ridiculous than either weakly opposing the war effort or blindly following the war charge of a Republican President. Either way, the Democrats are sure to lose votes. The war on terrorism made George W. a President with tremendous polling numbers, that no one dared question publicly after 9/11. A year later, this hype has worn thin and his support base needs a shot in the arm.

War as distraction.

The truth is that George W. has been a fairly lousy President who has found the war on terrorism to be an excellent distraction from his poor domestic record.

- Recent polls show that the American people are more concerned with the economy than with Iraq. Since the Bush Presidency began, middle class incomes fell for the first time since 1991 with the median income falling by $934 and the number of poor Americans increasing by 1.3 million, the first increase in 8 years.[15]
- The election fiasco that put George W. in office outraged most Americans, yet the recurrence of problems in last month's Florida election shows that little has been done. Instead, George W. has been busy fundraising, having recently shattered the record for most money raised by a President by their first mid-term vote. George W. raised over $100 million, more than twice what President Clinton raised for Democrats at the same point in his Presidency.[16]
- George W. has always been proud of his pro-industry positions when it came to the environment. After snubbing the Kyoto Protocol negotiations, the Bush administration simply had the section on global warming excluded from the Environmental Protection Agency's report on air pollution.[17] The administration has also worked to undo the wetland protections and land preserves established by former President Clinton. George W. has used the "Healthy Forests Initiative" as a guise to get around the Endangered Species Act and to justify logging trees from over 2.5 million acres of federal forest land over the next ten years in the name of forest fire prevention.[18] Amazingly enough, the Bush administration is even helping the auto industry fight California state legislation requiring the production of a small quantity of electric cars each year.[19]

War is a sound business decision.

The drive to war and the resulting control of Iraq—which holds the world's second largest oil reserves—opens countless opportunities for profit. The close relationship between the Bush administration and corporate America—especially the oil and weapons industries certainly has had an influence on their decisions.

- Pushing America's youth into battle has always been a great justification to increase defense spending. Suddenly the military budget is sailing through Congress with a $37.5 billion increase, which means the Pentagon budget would be $355.4 billion annually.[20] Vice President Cheney and his wife Lynne, members of the board of directors at Lockheed-Martin until the Bush presidency, must still have close ties to one of the largest weapons manufacturers in the world.[21]
- Certainly the fact that Iraq has immense oil reserves just waiting to be tapped makes the Bush administration see dollar signs. Bush, a former oil man himself, is advised by Vice President Cheney, who is the former CEO of Haliburton. Subsidiaries of Haliburton sold more oil drilling equipment to Iraq than any other, submitting $23.8 million worth of contracts with Iraq to the UN sanctions committee between 1998 and 1999.[22] Condolezza Rice, George W.'s National Security Advisor served on the board of Chevron corporation and even had an oil tanker named after her! Today, France and Russia have inside track on Iraqi oil, but US interests would be happy to see this situation changed with a new US-backed leadership in Baghdad.

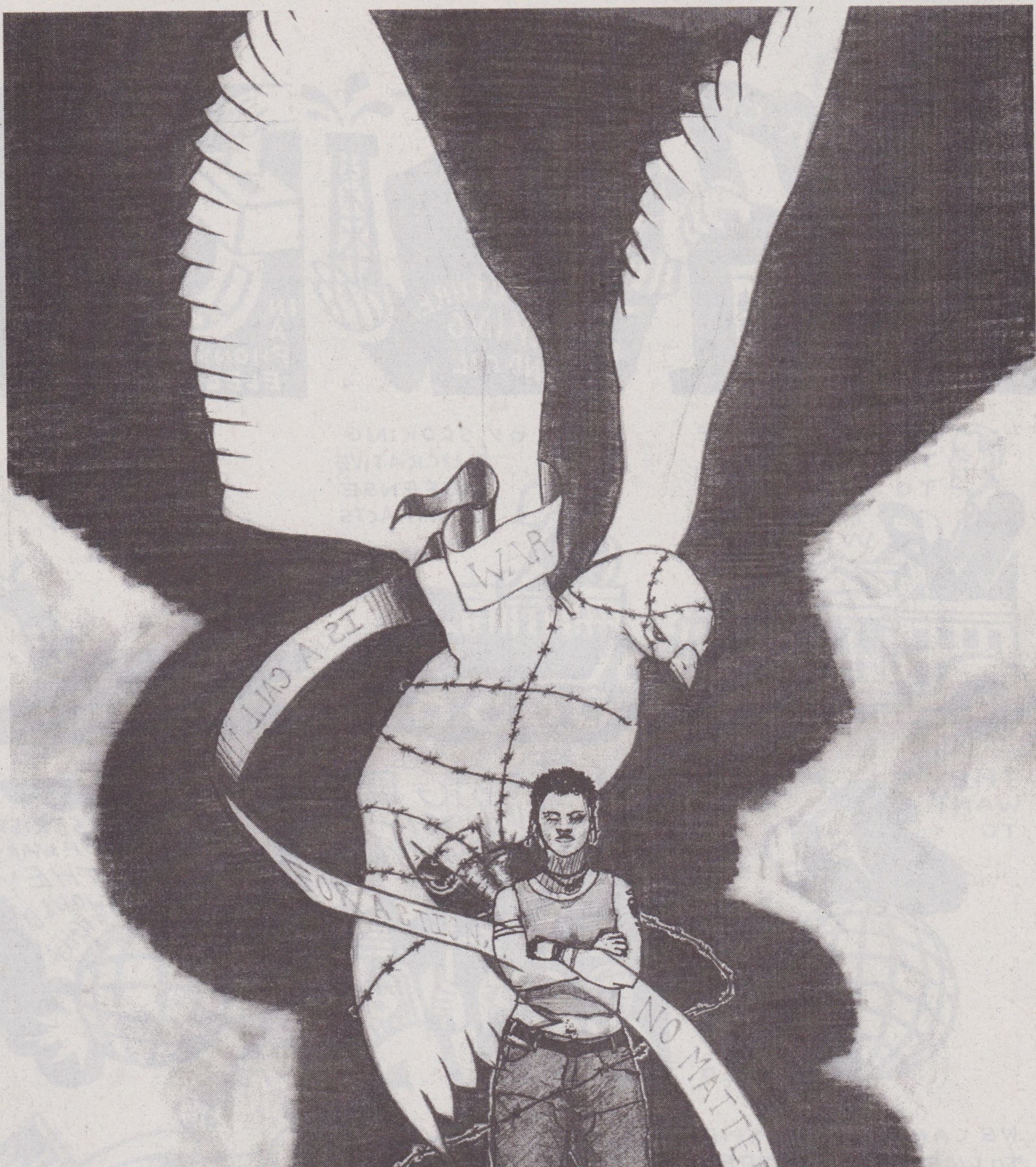
Imperial aspirations.

George W. as our own Napoleon. Congress has been pushed and prodded into reaffirming an almost emperor-like president by allowing George W. the power to take the United States into war without getting their approval—a key part of our Constitution. Prior to Congress' capitulation, *The Nation* warned, "The principle of Congressional oversight of the most fundamental decision government can make—whether to send its sons and daughters into danger—will have been entirely abandoned… A Congressional vote for preemptive assault would create a damaging precedent… imperil the Constitution and transform the President into an imperial overlord."[23] However, Congress conceded to George W's wishes anyway.

The unwillingness of Congress to question the Bush administration's motives and the apparent inability of the world community to stop their aggressive actions could lead the United States, and the world, into a very dark new century. All hail Emperor Bush!

Bryan Alft
Contrascience zine
balft@isd.net

[1] *UK Sunday Herald*, 9/15/02
[2] ibid.
[3] ibid.
[4] *The Nation*, 10/14/02
[5] ibid.
[6] Richard Blow, TomPaine.com, 9/12/02
[7] ibid.
[8] *The Nation*, 9/30/02
[9] ibid.
[10] *Boston Globe*, 10/1/02
[11] Marty Jezer, CommonDreams.org, 10/4/02
[12] David Corn, TheNation.com, 10/10/02
[13] *The Guardian*
[14] ibid.
[15] *The New York Times*, 9/25/02
[16] Jill Rachel Jacobs, TomPaine.com, 9/19/02
[17] *The New York Times*, 9/15/02
[18] Jeffrey St.Clair, Counterpunch.org, 8/24/02
[19] *The New York Times*, 10/10/02
[20] *The New York Times*, 10/11/02
[21] David Edwards, Zmag.org/ZNET, 9/14/02
[22] *The New York Times*, 10/11/02
[23] *The Nation*, 9/30/02



artwork by andy em

artwork by seth tobocman

US War on Iraq and the Unfinished American Revolution

By Mark Andersen

These are the ugly facts as I see them: No matter what the United Nations resolves or the anti-war movement attempts, a massive US attack on Iraq is now almost inevitable.

In the short term, such an attack is likely to increase support for the policy domestically, as Americans rally to "support the troops." The Bush Administration hopes that the Iraqi army mostly buckles, that the populace generally welcomes the troops, and that the US is able to eliminate Saddam Hussein with a minimum of American casualties or visible "collateral damage," i.e. civilian deaths. Such an outcome would likely propel Bush II back to dizzying heights of popularity, positioning him nicely for re-election in 2004. The stakes involved here are immense, as this also means the consolidation of a conservative counter-revolution begun by Reagan and Bush I over two decades ago.

While this scenario is unlikely, and Bush is clearly playing with fire, the power of the world's reigning empire must not be underestimated—just as none should overestimate Hussein's popular support in long-suffering Iraq. The anti-war movement must thus be prepared for an extended struggle, mobilizing quickly and massively, but with intelligence, sensitivity, and staying power. Sadly, I fear we must hope less for swiftly stopping this attack than for looking longer and deeper, towards how to organize to ultimately change underlying power relations and values in this country.

While this may prove difficult for activists born in sub-/counter-cultural arenas like punk, this means we must not cede any ground—including that of patriotism or religion—to Bush II and his ilk without a fight. In the end, this is a struggle for the soul of this country, with grave implications for the world: Will the United States of America be an empire or a democracy?

"If America has entered the war to make the world 'safe for democracy,' she must first make democracy safe in America... we represent the kind of patriotism that loves America with open eyes. We love her beauty, we love her riches, we love her mountains and her forests, and, above all, we love the people who have produced her wealth and riches, who have created all her beauty, we love the dreamers and the philosophers and the thinkers who are giving America liberty... but this must not make us blind to the social faults of America, to the terrible wrongs committed in the name of patriotism and in the name of the country."

Emma Goldman, on trial for opposing World War I, 1917

It's hard to fully express just how depressing the dog days of summer have been here in Washington DC version 2002. Each morning we have been greeted not just by the humid hell of summer hanging on well into what-should-be-fall, but by headlines of sniper attacks, budget cuts in services to the needy, death and destruction in Afghanistan and Israel/Palestine—and our alleged president's apparent desire to provide even more mayhem.

It is unclear whether Bush is cynically manipulating war rhetoric to distract an election year populace from mounting economic woes or whether he is simply hell-bent on war against one-time US ally Saddam Hussein due to a personal vendetta inherited from his father. Anti-war forces have struggled to respond effectively, hampered by a post-9/11 anger that often translates to a national taste for vengeance, the equation of dissent with treason, and a startlingly lenient attitude towards police-state infringements of civil liberties. Whatever the source of Bush's animus, the moment is as scary as hell.

As the above suggests, there is history here—history that Bush II would prefer we all just forget. Oil has long loomed large in US strategic considerations vis-a-vis the Middle East, far larger than any supposed concern for democracy or human rights. The overthrow of Iranian Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh in 1953 due to his nationalistic oil policies is just one of the more egregious examples of US meddling in Mideast affairs. It is no accident that the first eruption of the militant fundamentalist Islam now bedeviling Western policy-makers (even as it provides neat justification for a Cold War revival, complete with a new "ultimate evil" to replace communism) arose here, with the 1979 revolution against the notoriously brutal and corrupt Shah of Iran, a long-time US crony.

It is also no accident that the rise of this understandably anti-American regime led the Reagan/Bush Administrations to ally with another bloodthirsty (nominally Sunni Muslim but essentially secular) leader, an Iraqi named Saddam Hussein. For most of 1980s we aided Hussein,s war against Ayatollah Khomeini's Shiite Iran. Today one would hardly guess that the USA provided military support and diplomatic cover to Hussein even as he used chemical weapons to stem Iranian advances. Also conveniently forgotten—amidst pious gasps at the horror of Hussein killing "his own people"—is our government's tolerance for the Iraqi gassing of thousands of the Kurdish ethnic minority in 1988.

Washington's embrace of Hussein as a useful tool ended with his invasion of Kuwait. In strategic terms, this attack was a huge blunder on the part of Hussein, incurring not only the wrath of Washington, but also solidifying the Arab world squarely against him. Oil and other geopolitical interests drove the US response, not the oft-expressed desire to uphold international law, human rights, and democracy—commodities all-too-rare in the Middle East, as absent now as then. Without this US assault, there would never have been US military bases in Saudi Arabia to turn another former ally—"freedom fighter" Osama bin Laden—into our deadly enemy, and the Twin Towers no doubt would still be standing.

Arab unity in support of war, of course, does not exist this time, although US arm-twisting has brought grudging assent or, at least, not outright opposition by many. Nonetheless, the increasingly imminent military assault holds many dangers. No fool politically, Hussein has been courting his people and armed forces more assiduously, to avoid a repeat of the embarrassing mass defections of 1991.

In addition, the punishing sanctions widely associated with the US have resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands over the past decade including, according to UNICEF, perhaps more than 500,000 children. This has enabled Hussein to blame his own failures on the pressure of the USA—which may lead many average Iraqis to oppose the US more this time around. Of course, some will also welcome the end of the Hussein era, especially if it were to bring the promise of the end of sanctions and Iraq's isolation from the world.

In any case, it is clear that while Iraq can hardly hope to stand up to the US army, they do intend to extract a much more dear cost in American lives this time around, by drawing ground troops into close combat in city streets. In such fighting, it will be hard to avoid significant US casualties or, more worrisome, massive Iraqi civilian deaths. Finally, the only credible scenario suggested thus far for Iraqi use of chemical or bacterial agents could arise: a cornered Saddam Hussein who no longer had anything to lose.

Once a "victory" has occurred, what comes next? Credible observers both inside and outside the Bush administration suggest that the US will have to occupy any post-Hussein Iraq to avoid a slide into bloody civil war. Otherwise, the country could splinter in the resulting power vacuum, destabilizing the entire region, as Kurds in the north make common cause with their tribal cousins in Turkey and Iran, and the Shiite majority in the south move towards alliance with Shia-ruled Iran. Absent a massive, sustained US role, the potential for regional conflict, especially given the on-going struggles in Israel/Palestine and Afghanistan, is clearly present, perhaps even likely.

In other words, while no one can possibly presume to predict what will happen once US troops hit Iraqi soil, a "preemptive war" supposedly designed to decrease the alleged threat of Hussein looks far more likely to increase the danger.

"I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin the shift from a 'thing-oriented' society to a 'person-oriented' society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered... A nation that continues year after year to spend more

on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death."

—Martin Luther King, Jr., "Why I am Opposed to the War in Vietnam" speech, 1967

Ironically, the focus on Iraq threatens to distract from the larger issues allegedly at stake in the "war on terrorism"—the "clash of civilizations" with a militant anti-west, anti-modern Islam. While Hussein is many despicable things, he is not a fundamentalist. Although he now shrouds himself in pieties to shore up domestic support eroded by his brutal policies (including a bloody suppression of an early 1990s Shia Muslim uprising) he is about as "Muslim" as Bush II is "Christian": The religious blather is sometimes useful, but is easily discarded whenever inconvenient ideas like "blessed are the peacemakers" might cramp anyone's war-making mood.

The so-called "Bush Doctrine" offers the flimsiest of justifications to cloak a simple, arrogant US claim that, in effect, "our might makes right." This policy of preemptive strikes against "terrorism" threatens to unmake decades of painfully gained progress toward an international rule of law. At the same time, it also solidifies an image of the USA as an imperial power unconcerned with the pain of the world's majority, intent on defending its own economic and strategic interests, no matter the human cost.

This noxious doctrine, with its naked assertion of American imperial prerogatives, was, of course, made possible by 9/11. The terrible act of terrorism that cost over 3000 lives in New York, DC, and Pennsylvania has been used to justify not only attacks in Afghanistan (that may have killed a similar number of innocent people), but also to stoke the fires of the military-industrial complex. Given a "war on terrorism" that threatens to stretch for decades against the most shadowy of enemies, untold billions will be poured into the furnace, even as poverty and inequality grow in America. Even *USA Today* has noted in an August cover article that much of the sympathy generated by 9/11 around the world has been turned to anger by Bush's arrogant, aggressive actions.

One sadly insightful sign I saw at a recent demonstration mimicked the classic US Army recruiting poster, reading: "Uncle Osama Wants You... to Attack Iraq." Ironically, US action against Iraq without world support is likely only to stoke the fires of anti-American sentiment, thus ultimately breeding more support for bin Laden-style terror.

Are we a nation addicted to war, as Joel Andreas' recent AK Press book suggests? It certainly seems so. Over three decades after economist Seymour Melman wrote his groundbreaking work, *The Permanent War Economy*, we, if anything, seem more tied to military expenditures than ever. According to the War Resisters League, fully 46% of the total federal budget for fiscal year 2003—a total of nearly $800 billion!—will go for current or past military expenditures, dwarfing the $500 billion devoted to human services.

The cost of maintaining what can only be termed an American "empire" should not be underestimated. The time of bulging budget surpluses is suddenly, definitively gone, and we have entered an era of budget shortfalls, with consequent massive, on-going cuts in services to the needy. No less an Establishment paragon than *Time* magazine has estimated that a three month war in Iraq (with a five year occupation) would cost $272 billion, beyond that already allocated to "defense." This in a context where painful cuts in essential services to the poor were recently enacted over a DC budget deficit of just $323 million!

Perhaps not surprisingly, the proposed attack on Iraq has exposed cracks even within the war economy establishment, with key members of both the Republican Party and of the Pentagon expressing misgivings. Ordinarily, this might be sufficient to stem the rush to war. However, Bush is a popular president acting forcefully in a time of national trauma (and Congressional elections!), so even the Democratic leadership has fallen into line, signing a blank check that assures Bush may have the war he so desperately craves.

All this despite the fact that Bush has failed to tie Saddam Hussein in any convincing way to Al Qaeda or bin Laden! Even the CIA has suggested in Congressional testimony that Hussein is unlikely to use his "weapons of mass destruction" at any time foreseeable, knowing full well the inevitable retaliation. The Iraqi dictator is surely brutal, but by no means suicidal. Inspections and containment seem a reasonable course to virtually everyone but a Bush Administration lost in mirages of mushroom clouds.

Nonetheless—it breaks my heart to say this, by the way, and I hope to proven wrong—I don't think there is anything the anti-war movement can do at this point to stop the impending US attack. By saying this, I don't mean to slight the importance of the many actions that are going on; indeed, they are profoundly important. I have been (and will continue to be) at as many demonstrations as I can possibly attend, as well to make the calls and write the letters necessary to pressure elected representatives, even though this is a bit tough in DC, lacking any voting representation in Congress.

However, having experienced the quick rise of opposition to war in 1991 and its even-more-sudden—and profoundly dispiriting—collapse as the war went "well" for Americans (i.e., not many of "us" died), I know we need to be prepared for a hard road ahead.

There is more hope over the slightly longer term. Even though the "Vietnam Syndrome" was supposedly swept away by the Persian Gulf War, considerable residual public skepticism remains towards overseas military adventures. Indeed, most polls show that, despite all of Bush's efforts, a majority of Americans oppose an attack on Iraq if our allies don't support us in this course of action, or if significant numbers of Americans will die.

Once the war begins (and US casualties mount) we can then hope to alter its course, bring it to a close, even allow it to help bring down the Bush regime in 2004. Although no-one can predict the course of the war, I expect European resistance to be sustained, given the already massive outpouring of anti-war opinion in the streets and voting booths. Opposition from around the world will also likely build. We need to assist this through patient local organizing and education, all designed sensitively as to not unnecessarily alienate masses of Americans still traumatized by 9/11.

In DC and beyond, many are attempting this on numerous different levels. Organizations like the Education for Peace In Iraq Center (EPIC) and Voices In the Wilderness have ratcheted up their longstanding efforts. They have been effective at linking with religious networks like the Catholic peace and justice groups Pax Christi and Network, as well as with Protestant groups such as the American Friends Service Committee, the Lutheran Peace Fellowship and evangelical activists Sojourners, developing campaigns of lobbying, press conferences, teach-ins, and peace vigils. Growing numbers are pledging to commit acts of nonviolent civil disobedience should US rhetoric turn into bombs. Meanwhile, the US Catholic bishops as well as leaders of mainstream Protestant denominations have spoken out against the rush towards war.

Secular activists are also answering the call. In the punk community, Positive Force DC has helped to support and publicize many of these actions and are working on upcoming protests, benefit concerts and other events to support anti-war efforts. Long-time DC punks like Ian MacKaye of Fugazi and Allison Wolfe of Bratmobile have spoken out forcefully against the Bush "war on terrorism" and the impending attack. Perhaps most importantly, the "Not In Our Name" project rallied as many as 20,000 in Central Park on October 6, and the ANSWER coalition has been building for a crucial national demonstration here in DC, together with a simultaneous action in San Francisco on October 26. Both of these groups have tried, with some success, to bridge an obvious secular/religious divide.

In some ways, this is an impressive list. Still, while some activists argue that anti-war efforts are far ahead of that at a comparable period during the Vietnam War, I think this analogy is a bit misleading. Iraq is not Vietnam, and the war there will probably have a trajectory quite unlike that past Southeast Asian conflict with its long history of anti-colonial struggle, paired with a slow US military build-up.

Instead, we stand on the edge of a massive military attack fraught with unpredictable dangers—and, yet our marches have been dwarfed in size thus far by similar ones overseas. Moreover, as suggested above, my guess is that the war will initially become more popular, not less so. While this will likely shift, we need to build our movement with patience, sensitivity, and smarts, so that, in the words of anti-Vietnam War activist Todd Gitlin, the anti-war movement does not become more unpopular even as the war does.

While the e-world has been activated skillfully to build anti-war mobilization, that virtual community needs to become evermore real (i.e. transcend itself, become widely visible) to really effect the political tide. In addition, links need to be strengthened between secular activists and faith-based ones, as well as across religious, cultural, racial, and class lines. This points to a larger, essential challenge: How can we build an anti-war/social justice movement that is grounded in the American mainstream and, thus, can truly succeed?

"The world is my country, all men are my brethren, and my religion is to do good."
—Thomas Paine, author of *Common Sense,* a key catalyst of the American Revolution

The above question may sound blasphemous coming from a countercultural activist of some twenty-plus years, although it shouldn't surprise readers of *Dance of Days.* However, if I have learned anything from my experience in the underground, it is that broader change can't be achieved by subcultural-arrogance-verging-on-elitism.

We need to act with an eye to the future and towards making in-roads into the mass of America—chanting "fuck the war!" with bandannas over our faces will not nearly suffice. While scorn for middle America (apparently lost in a sea of flags and exclamations of "God Bless America!") may be personally comforting, politically, it will keep us in a self-created ghetto. Meanwhile, Bush and his pals will have the last laugh at the expense of Iraqis, Afghanis, Palestinians, and other marginalized people everywhere.

This concern to not alienate middle America can go too far, it is true. Gitlin, for example, has veered perilously close to Red-baiting with his attacks on ANSWER and "Not In Our Name" for being tied to the Marxist-Leninist "Workers World Party" and the Maoist "Revolutionary Communist Party," respectively.

The presence of these groups or the Trotskyist "International Socialist Organization," doesn't bother me; indeed, individual members have proven to be flexible, committed, hard-working, and effective organizers. On the other hand, it would be tragic if any of these sects—with their overheated rhetoric and history of support for repressive movements and dictators overseas—were to dominate the anti-war coalitions. At the very least, it would surely make these entities highly flawed vehicles for a movement attempting to genuinely transform American society.

Thus far, these concerns seem illusory, as ANSWER's April action brought out a promisingly mixed crowd, including Arab-Americans and Muslims in record numbers, as, apparently, the "Not In Our Name" Central Park demo also did. In any case, the so-called "authoritarian leftists" are correct in arguing that the roots of the challenge before us are deep, reaching far past Bush's personal issues with Hussein to the core of the US economy and society. We, then, must also reach deep into ourselves, into each other, and, most of all, into our own roots: the very real revolutionary treasures of this country's history.

Lest we forget, this is a country born of an anti-imperial revolution. The pull of this idealism, this unfinished revolution, however tainted by slavery, genocide, or modern complacency, is nonetheless real. We can, once again, set afire the rebel heart of this country. This is an American dream that, if not always as powerful as its competing McCorporate call of greed, nonetheless has helped inspired liberation movements across the world for two centuries.

Radical patriots like Emma Goldman, Thomas Paine, and MLK spoke, in their moment, with a distinctly American revolutionary voice, not seeking to be set off from the mass, but to lift and transform from within. Even well-intentioned actions like the recent People's Strike here in DC that try to link local and global struggles run the risk of setting protesters off from everyday Americans through their tactics, just as email networks can keep us talking to ourselves rather than those outside our existing circles that need to be reached.

I believe those people can be reached, that we can become a mass, majority movement. But to do so, we must find our way past knee-jerk "anti-" sentiments, to make common cause with the progressive aspects of religion and, yes, even of patriotism. Like Emma Goldman, we must love the people of this country, not scorn them. We need to speak their language, ground ourselves in their communities, communities that include punk but that stretch far beyond as well.

This importance of this was made crystal clear during a demo that I attended while in Denver on a book tour in September 2001. I marched with about 1000 mostly ordinary folks calling for peace, opposing a war of vengeance that would kill more innocents. It was a terrible moment in the country, requiring, I felt, special restraint and sensitivity. As I mingled with the crowd, a sizable bloc of masked punks marched past, beating drums, perhaps inspired by DC punk percussion protests of the mid-80s.

Although feeling kinship with their energy, I also winced at their bandanna-obscured faces, as it seemed unconscionably out-of-sync with the dominant national mood, unlikely to win converts to the cause, but likely to alienate. It was also sure to draw the attention of on-looking police officers as, in fact, it quickly did. As the "peace demonstration" threatened to descend into a punk/police face-off, one Arab-American protester confronted the punks, angrily denouncing the masks he saw as an macho affectation that was only making life worse for his already embattled community.

Following not far behind this sad scene was a slightly stooped elderly man with white-hair, crowned by a three-cornered hat and carrying the original 13-starred US flag, relics of a then-fledgling revolutionary experiment. He took a glance at the unfolding fiasco, and marched on undeterred. Perhaps I am wrong, but in that moment, I knew where hope lay—in resolutely reclaiming what is best in this country's past to build a better future for all.

Of course, it is possible that this is all a pipe dream, that America will never rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed as MLK and so many others have hoped. In 1986, upon leaving behind a possible career in the Foreign Service or State Department, I wrote that America was too caught in its own coils of comfort and self-deceit to live out real democracy or human rights at home, much less abroad. Quite simply, this approach was not contained within our narrow sense of self-interest.

Those questions still tear at my heart, all-too-unanswered. Yet, should Iraqis die because I found it too hard to struggle for the soul of the country I was, by some twist of fate, born into? Should the world be condemned to unending war and/or imperial domination because I feared my hands would be sullied by stepping into the messy fray of coalition politics, of trying to speak a language the majority of my fellow Americans would understand, would be moved by? I don't think so.

No, I still believe in another, more enlightened American self-interest, grounded in the revolutionary ideals of this country, standing at great tension with the Imperial America now on display. There is a patriotism that rises from this democratic vision, although, as in Thomas Paine's statement above, it is not bound by narrow nationalism.

In short, we cannot afford to surrender the progressive aspects of this country's heritage as long as it holds the fate of the world in its hands. This is surely a profound challenge, given the American darkness of the moment. Nonetheless, to fail to take up this task is to relinquish precisely that which must be held most tightly if we are to ultimately triumph.

We stand, then, at a crossroads. Can we grow to meet the challenge before us? Or will we go loudly into the darkness, lulled by arrogance, lured by convenience?

For me, the answer is clear. George W. Bush has spoken—now, as an old DC band once sang, "It's time to speak and move." Let's speak with smarts and sensitivity, let's move in broader communities, creatively; let's reclaim this country. It is the best thing we could do for Iraq, Palestine, Israel, Afghanistan... for our world.

Mark Andersen is the co-founder of Positive Force DC, a punk activist collective created in 1985, as well as Outreach Coordinator for Emmaus Services for the Aging, a small outreach and advocacy organization serving seniors in inner-city DC. He is also the co-author of Dance of Days: Two Decades of Punk in the Nation's Capital and can be reached at emmausdc@aol.com. He finished this article on October 19, 2002.

AN ANTIWAR RESOURCE GUIDE

Compiled by Amanda Luker

NEWS: IT'S NOT JUST FOR BROKAW ANYMORE

International Newspapers
For a reality check, locate daily papers from other countries to temper the effects of the notorious American media filter. Even mainstream newspapers like *Britain's The Guardian* (www.guardian.co.uk) and Canada's *Globe and Mail* (www.globeandmail.com) will often allow for a critical voice of American foreign policy. I always enjoy checking South Africa's *Daily Mail* and *Guardian* (mg.co.za/mg.) Reading these papers, it becomes abundantly clear which stories the *Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* are currently trying to bury.

Iraq News Agency
See what Iraq has to say at this site. The very first thing one might note upon loading this site is "Stupid American Sanctions" in large, bold letters. Along with being a news service, they also have links to many reports, including how sanctions have affected Iraqi environment, society, and education. They personally have felt the effects: "INA has 48 offices and correspondents in Arab and foreign countries, reduced to 15 since the sanctions have been imposed on Iraq in August 1990." One might also be interested to read official statements from Saddam Hussein.
www.uruklink.net/iraqnews/eindex.htm

Commondreams.org
Commondreams.org is incredibly useful. The website is updated daily with the latest, best news and commentary from daily newspapers and alternative magazines, as well as some in-house articles. Consolidating all the good articles from the day onto one site makes Commondreams.org a great home page, and less work for you!
www.commondreams.org

Democracy Now!
Democracy Now! is a national, listener-sponsored public radio show broadcast on 120 stations nationwide, including the Pacifica Radio International. Hosted by Amy Goodman and Juan Gonzalez, DN! produces a daily one-hour show that embodies Goodman's now-famous phrase: "The exception to the rulers." If you can't find it on a radio station in your area, don't worry—it's online.
mail@democracynow.org
www.democracynow.org

The Nation
The Nation, the stalwart of leftwing journalism, has made no bones about its anti-war stance—even to the point of losing one of most prominent writers, Christopher Hitchens, over the issue. The website has a wonderful collection of articles and links to outside sites which detail why Americans should contest going to war with Iraq.
The Nation
33 Irving Place New York, New York 10003
212-209-5400
www.thenation.com

War Times
Emerging in response to the reactionary, patriotic fervor after Sept 11 that granted Bush the power to wage possibly unending war, *War Times* is a new newspaper ("free, mass produced, biweekly, and nationally distributed") and website to be used as an educational tool for organizers and activists. The website also includes a great list of books for further reading. They are currently looking for distribution help, which would be a good way to start getting involved!
EBC/War Times
1230 Market Street, PMB 409
San Francisco, CA 94102
www.war-times.org

HEY, SOME PETITIONS DO WORK!

Iraq Peace Pledge
Here's what it says. It's neat and easy: I support peace for Iraq. I grant permission to use my name and city publicly as an opponent of the ongoing economic and bombing war on Iraq, and of any escalation of that war. As I'm writing, there are 19,781 signatures.
web@peacepledge.org
www.peacepledge.org

Not in Our Name Project
NOIN's Statement of Purpose begins, "Let it not be said that people in the United States did nothing when their government declared a war without limit and instituted stark new measures of repression." Signed by activists and intellectuals including Barbara Kingsolver, John Edgar Wideman, Noam Chomsky, and Edward Said, the Statement of Purpose, along with their widely-circulated Pledge of Resistance, is the backbone of this project. Besides providing informational packets and downloadable material for distribution, they are the organizers of many of the large rallies popping up in its home cities. Currently, there are branches of NOIN in New York, San Francisco, New Haven, CT, Atlanta, Chicago, Boston, Chapel Hill, NC, Philadelphia, South Carolina, Houston, Aberdeen, Seattle, WA, and Kickapoo, WI.
Not In Our Name
New York City
(Call or check their web site for contacts for other locations)
212-969-8058
www.notinourname.net
Not In Our Name c/o WILPF
339 Lafayette Street
New York, NY 10012

DIY RESOURCES

Iraqspeakers.org
Part of the Education for Peace in Iraq Center (epic-usa.org), the Iraq Speakers Bureau provides an invaluable resource. "The Iraq Speakers Bureau provides direct access to policy experts, diplomats, former UN officials, human rights activists, and public health researchers who are committed to taking you beyond the headlines," they write. "Each speaker shares critical insight, rational analysis, and compassionate stories that can turn news into vivid reality." The have an online form you can fill out to request a speaker for an event. Speakers include Phyllis Bennis, Hans Von Sponeck, Stephen Zunes, and Anthony Arnove. Their site also has a really useful "How to Organize a Forum" section.
Education for Peace in Iraq Center
1101 Pennsylvania Ave. SE
Washington, DC 20003 U.S.A.
(202) 543-6176
www.iraqspeakers.org

Why-war.com
This is an effective portal for accessing up-to-date information and news on the movement, run by a student at Swarthmore. The coolest part—that sets it apart from other similar sites—is the Resources for Established Groups area. Here you can download texts on everything from how to make vinyl bumper stickers and effective pamphlets to a guide on good old-fashioned face-to-face arguing.
www.why-war.com

KNOW WHY YOU OPPOSE A WAR

ZNet
If you have any questions about the current situation or want to learn more about war and terrorism, read "911 Terrorism & War FAQ." This is a good place to enter a website that is so massive one might not know where to begin. Here, you will find analysis by the top scholars on the Middle East of the day: Noam Chomsky, Edward Said, Stephen Shalom. *Z* is also a monthly print magazine, in which many of these articles also appear.
Z Magazine
18 Millifield Street

Often, the best solution is the simplest. However, the George/Saddam duel doesn't look like it's happening any time soon. So, if you aren't involved in the growing anti-war protest movement already, now is the time. This abridged resource list is divided into categories of resources: news, petitions, history, DIY, protest listings, and further action.

These are by no means everything out there; it would be an impossible task. But, many of these resources will put you into contact with local groups who are working to halt an undeserved and unsupported war with Iraq.

Woods Hole, MA 02543
508-548-9063
www.zmag.org

US Bombing Watch
Here's an eerie compilation of all the US bombings of Iraq, each date accompanied by the damning news story. It's all there.
Colorado Campaign for Middle East Peace
901 West 14th Avenue, Suite 7
Denver, CO 80204
720-956-0700
www.ccmep.org/us_bombing_watch.html

Foreign Policy In Focus
FPIF is a "think tank without walls" that functions as an international network of more than 650 policy analysts and advocates. Unlike traditional think tanks, FPIF is committed to advancing a citizen-based foreign policy agenda—one that is fundamentally rooted in citizen initiatives and movements.
www.foreignpolicy-infocus.org

The Children of Iraq
The Children of Iraq is an independent newsletter and website which seeks to tell Americans and others about the largely-overlooked humanitarian catastrophe caused by the United Nations sanctions which are hurting them and killing the children of Iraq. It calls for an end to the economic sanctions on Iraq and calls for treating the children of Iraq with the respect that they, like all children everywhere, deserve.
The Children of Iraq
310 Riverside Dr. #511
New York, NY 10025
www.childrenofiraq.org

Washington Report on Middle East Affairs
The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs is a 140-page magazine published ten times per year in Washington, DC, that focuses on news and analysis from and about the Middle East and US policy in that region. *The Washington Report* is published by the American Educational Trust (AET), a non-profit foundation incorporated in Washington, DC by retired US foreign service officers to provide the American public with accurate information concerning US relations with Middle Eastern states.
American Educational Trust, Inc.
PO Box 53062, Washington, DC 20009
Phone: (202) 939-6050
Fax: (202) 265-4574
www.wrmea.com

HEY, WHERE'S THE NEXT ACTION?

Pax.protest.net
Pax.protest.net provides a global calendar of pro-peace and anti-racism protests, meetings, benefits, and conferences. Their listings include anti-war and anti-racism events organized around the world. There is online form to list your own events.
rabble@protest.net
pax.protest.net

Unitedforpeace.org
The best part of this site is the ease of finding local information. Don't say you didn't know how to get involved locally!
info@UnitedForPeace.org
www.unitedforpeace.org
800-497-1994, ext. 263
415-255-7296, ext. 263

International A.N.S.W.E.R.
Spelled out, A.N.S.W.E.R. is the "Act Now to Stop War and Racism" coalition. They are one of the organizers of the October 26, 2002, National March on Washington, DC and joint action in San Francisco. The website also includes some handy downloadable fact sheets for mass distribution.
nowardc@yahoo.com
New York 212-633-6646
Washington 202-332-5757
Chicago 773-878-0166
San Francisco 415-821-6545
Check the Web site for contacts in your area.
www.internationalanswer.org

DEEPER INVOLVEMENT

Obviously, ending a war will take more work than signing a petition and attending a street protest. Here are a few ways to go further.

The American Friends Service Committee
This group has tons of great aid programs. One program sends the following items to assist with health care in war-torn Iraq. You buy the items and they ship it to Iraq.
4 bars of soap
1 plastic bottle of shampoo (13 - 24 ounce size or 450 - 830 milliliters).
Place in plastic bag.
1 tube of toothpaste (minimum 8 ounces or 100 milliliters)
4 adult-size toothbrushes (leave in packaging)
1 hairbrush
1 wide-tooth comb
1 fingernail clipper
1 box of adhesive bandages (minimum 40, assorted preferred)

In their water project, the AFSC is raising money to fund an overhaul on a water treatment outside of Baqooba.
American Friends Service Committee
1501 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102
888-588-2372
www.afsc.org/iraq

Iraq Action Coalition
The Iraq Action Coalition is an online media and activists' resource center for groups and activists who are working to end the war against the people of Iraq.
Iraq Action Coalition
7309 Haymarket Lane
Raleigh, NC 27615
http://iraqaction.org

Nonviolent Peace Force
Their statement reads: "The Nonviolent Peaceforce aims to save lives by preventing large outbreaks of violent conflict around the world. NP is a trained, international civilian nonviolent peace force." Specifically, NP organizes and trains volunteers to act as human shields to keep violence from escalating. It is an incredible, burgeoning, grass-roots project.
801 Front Ave. St. Paul, MN 55103
www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org

Voices in the Wilderness
VITW is doing some amazing work right now. One project is the Iraq Peace Team (iraqpeaceteam.org) to send seasoned nonviolent activists to take up residence in Iraq before and during a US attack. From the website you can download an application to join them. Another project is the Mirror of Truth bus that is traveling around the United States this fall. "On this tour," they write, "members of Voices in the Wilderness who have traveled to Iraq will bear witness to the lethal effects of US-led economic sanctions, a weapon of mass destruction which has, according to the UN itself, killed more than one million Iraqi civilians. Musicians, student activists, priests, and professors will join the tour at various sites to give presentations, concerts, and to coordinate nonviolent actions." Contact them to find out when they will be in your area.
Voices in the Wilderness
1460 West Carmen Avenue
Chicago, IL 60640
773-784-8065
info@vitw.org
www.nonviolence.org/vitw

A Brief History of US Involvement in Iraq

By Madeleine Baran. Illustration by Peter Kuper.

A few weeks ago, Iraqi vice president Taha Yasin Ramadan proposed that the America-Iraq standoff be solved the old-fashioned way. President Saddam Hussein and President Bush should fight a duel on neutral territory to settle their differences and prevent the brutality of war. Ramadan suggested that UN Secretary General Kofi Annan could serve as referee.

Ridiculous though it may seem, perhaps nothing would be more fitting. Duels are traditionally fought by acquaintances to settle age-old disputes and assuage ruffled pride. When a friendship goes awry, why not settle it in a civilized manner?

In one of the most oil-rich countries in the world, the United States has tried to cultivate a regime that will provide it the most oil at the cheapest price. The history of US involvement in Iraq is indeed one of a devious friendship turned sour.

The beginning of US involvement in Iraq really starts with Iran. In 1953, the CIA helped overthrow the democratically elected Mossadeq government in Iran, and catapulted the Shah, Mohammed Reza Pahlevi, to power. Not surprisingly, the Shah allowed the resources of Iran to be bought up and sold to Western investors, while simultaneously forcing Iranians to dress and act like Western citizens, but without any of the accompanying rights.

With such success in Iran, the US turned its sights to Iraq, where the Russians were already involved. In 1963, the US gave the Iraqi Ba'ath party (later headed by Saddam Hussein) names of communists to murder, according to Foreign Policy In Focus. The Ba'ath party carried out the executions, and the initial groundwork for a future friendship was set in place.

Seeking to gain control over Iraq's rich oil fields, the US supported Kurdish rebels from 1973 to 1975. However, in 1975, Iraq and Iran reach an agreement to close the border, and Iraq slaughtered the Kurds. The United States did nothing, outraging the Kurds. In a declassified document, Henry Kissinger explained, "covert action should not be confused with missionary work."

In the meantime, the Shah's government was breaking down. A new generation of intellectuals, combined with religious leaders and ordinary citizens, held huge demonstrations against the Shah from 1978 to 1979. The US tried desperately to organize a military coup to save the Shah, but it failed. After 25 years of American intervention, Iran was finally its own country.

The United States feared that the wave of revolution sweeping Iran would spread into neighboring Iraq and eventually, the entire Middle East. This would prove disastrous for Western oil interests, so the United States decided on a new tactic. It would now play Iran and Iraq off of one another, to prevent either from getting too powerful.

In 1980, Iraq invaded Iran. The United States opposed any Security Council action to condemn the invasion, contrasting greatly with their actions ten years later on the invasion of Kuwait.

In 1982, President Reagan removed Iraq from the list of states that sponsor terrorism, making it eligible to receive military technology from Washington. After a cordial visit to Hussein in 1983 by none other than present Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, the US sent Iraq a large amount of supplies: guns, helicopters (both to transport Iraqi officials and to spray enemies with chemical weapons), a computerized database for Hussein's Interior Ministry to keep track of political opponents, satellite photography to keep track of Iranian troop movements, missile fabrication equipment, missile system guidance equipment, chemical warfare production facility plans, chemical analysis equipment for the Iraq Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC), and more. This information was uncovered not by a leftist organization, but by the US Senate's committee on banking, housing, and urban affairs (which oversees American export policy).

In 1985, the United States started sending Iraq the deadliest weapons of all: chemical and biological materials, according to a Senate report. These were the exact same materials later discovered by UN weapons inspectors. Among the materials sent were: Bacillus Anthracis (the agent that causes anthrax), Clostridum Botulinum (the agent that causes botulism poisoning), Histoplasma Capsulatum (an agent that causes a disease that attacks the lungs, brain, spinal cord, and heart), Brucella Melitensis (bacteria that can damage major organs), E. Coli, human and bacterial DNA, germs similar to tuberculosis and pneumonia, and more, the report said.

These shipments were classified as "dual-use" because they could theoretically be used for peaceful research possibilities, as well as for war. The US government later tried to claim that they had no idea that Iraq would use these "dual-use" shipments as weapons, either in the Iran-Iraq war or against the Kurdish population within Iraq.

These claims are completely false. The UN reported on and condemned Iraq's use of chemical weapons in 1986. US Embassy staffers in Turkey interviewed Kurds who survived the chemical warfare attacks, and the CIA then delivered this information to the State Department, according to leftist scholar Noam Chomsky.

In 1988, Hussein ordered the gassing of the Kurdish town of Halabja with a lethal combination of mustard gas, sarin, tabun, and VX. At least 5000 men, women, and children died. The helicopters used were identical to those sent by the United States.

In 1987, Iraq commended the US for its "efforts" in the Middle East.

An investigative team sent by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1988 found "overwhelming evidence of extensive use of chemical weapons against civilians." The chair of the Committee, Claiborne Pells, had harsh words for the silence of the US government about these attacks, making allusions to Hitler and stating, "we cannot be silent to genocide again."

Still, the shipments of dangerous biological materials continued

until 1989, according to the Senate committee. Others claim the shipments lasted up to or even past the Gulf War. No matter the specific dates, the Senate report is quite clear, stating, "The United States provided the government of Iraq with 'dual-use' licensed materials which assisted in the development of Iraqi chemical, biological, and missile-system programs."

The US government did not seem concerned with Iraq's use of chemical weapons. As Geoffrey Kemp, head of the Middle East section in the National Security Council under Reagan, put it, "We weren't really that naïve. We knew that (Hussein) was an SOB, but he was our SOB."

The United States was on such good terms with Iraq that it was willing to overlook a 1987 accident in which an Iraqi missile hit an American destroyer in the Persian Gulf, killing 37 crewmen. If the same accident were repeated today, one would imagine the response would be quite different.

At the end of the Iran-Iraq war in 1988, both countries were devastated; but the United States continued its involvement with Iraq. Washington even asked Hussein to train several hundred Libyans sent to Iraq by the US in order to overthrow the Qaddafi government in Libya, according to former Reagan White House aide Howard Teicher.

In 1989, Iraq began having serious problems with Kuwait. The Iraqi government was quite vocal in protesting that Kuwait's monarchy was overproducing and driving down the cost of oil. Iraq lost $14 billion in revenues because of Kuwait's actions. Iraq also complained that Kuwait was stealing Iraqi oil by using slant drilling technology into the huge Rumaila oil field, most of which is inside Iraq. In addition, Kuwait refused to negotiate an agreement that would give Iraq partial access to the Persian Gulf.

Chomsky argues forcefully that Kuwait would never attempt to bring down oil prices unless there was some other motive at hand. Indeed, the idea of an oil-dependent country campaigning for the right to make less money on its oil seems ridiculous.

After the Gulf War, a number of lawyers, activists, and citizens brought a petition before the International War Crimes Tribunal, charging the United States government with 19 violations of international law. All 19 crimes were found to have been committed "beyond a reasonable doubt," according to the final Tribunal report. Included among these was the charge that, "The United States engaged in a pattern of conduct beginning in or before 1989, intended to lead Iraq into provocations justifying US military action against Iraq and permanent US military domination of the Gulf."

The original petition details the provocation leading up to the Gulf War, stating, "In 1989, General Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and General Norman Schwarzkopf, Commander in Chief of the Central Command, completely revised US military operations and plans for the Persian Gulf to prepare to intervene in a regional conflict against Iraq. The CIA assisted and directed Kuwait in its actions. At the time, Kuwait was violating OPEC oil production agreements, extracting excessive amounts of oil from pools shared with Iraq and demanding repayment of loans it made to Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war. Kuwait broke off negotiations with Iraq over these disputes. The US intended to provoke Iraq into actions against Kuwait that would justify US intervention."

The petition continues, "In July 1990, General Schwarzkopf and his staff ran elaborate, computerized war games pitting about 100,000 US troops against Iraqi armored divisions."

In the midst of secret planning, the United States gave no warning to Hussein about the change in its relationship. The president even sent a special committee, led by Senator Bob Dole, to visit Hussein to convince him not to worry about dissenting opinions in the American media, according to Chomsky. When Hussein spoke to US Ambassador April Glaspie about a potential invasion of Kuwait, she assured him that the US looked on the matter as a purely regional concern and would not intervene, the petition said.

On August 2, 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait. The US responded immediately and sent troops to Saudi Arabia to prepare for war. The Gulf War ended up taking the lives of at least 100,000 troops and 113,000 civilians, according to the humanitarian Red Crescent Society of Jordan. The US suffered 148 combat casualties, according to the US government.

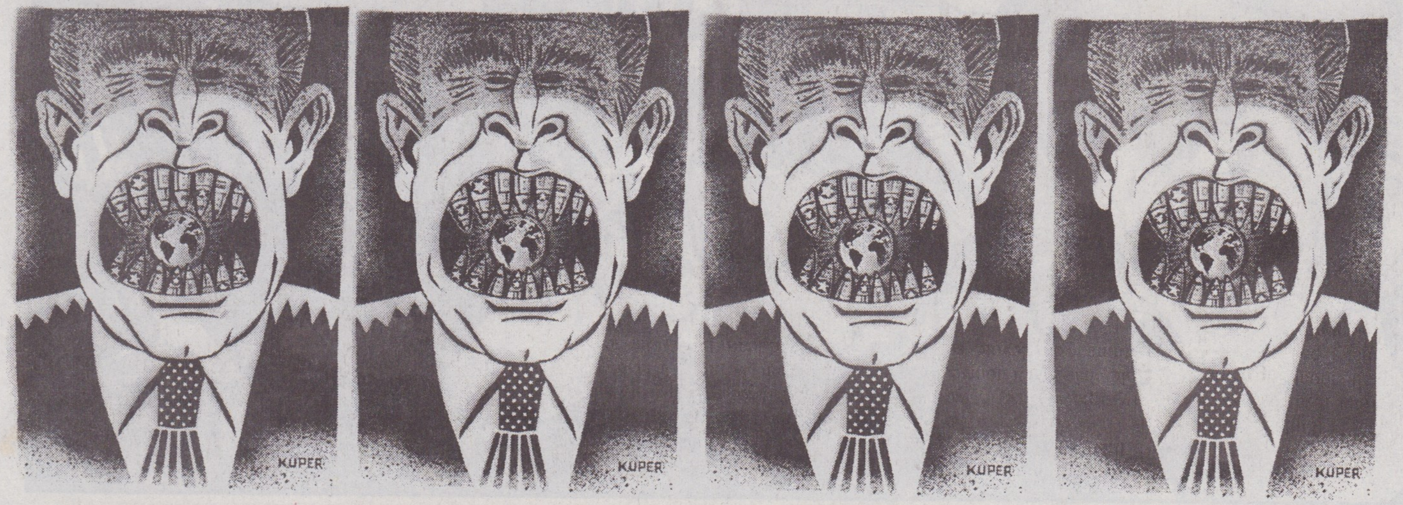
The United States intentionally bombed civilians, schools, hospitals, mosques, churches, residential areas, historical sites, commercial and business districts, shelters, private vehicles, and civilian government offices, according to the International War Crimes Tribunal. These actions violated the UN Charter, the Hague and Geneva Conventions, and the Nuremberg Charter.

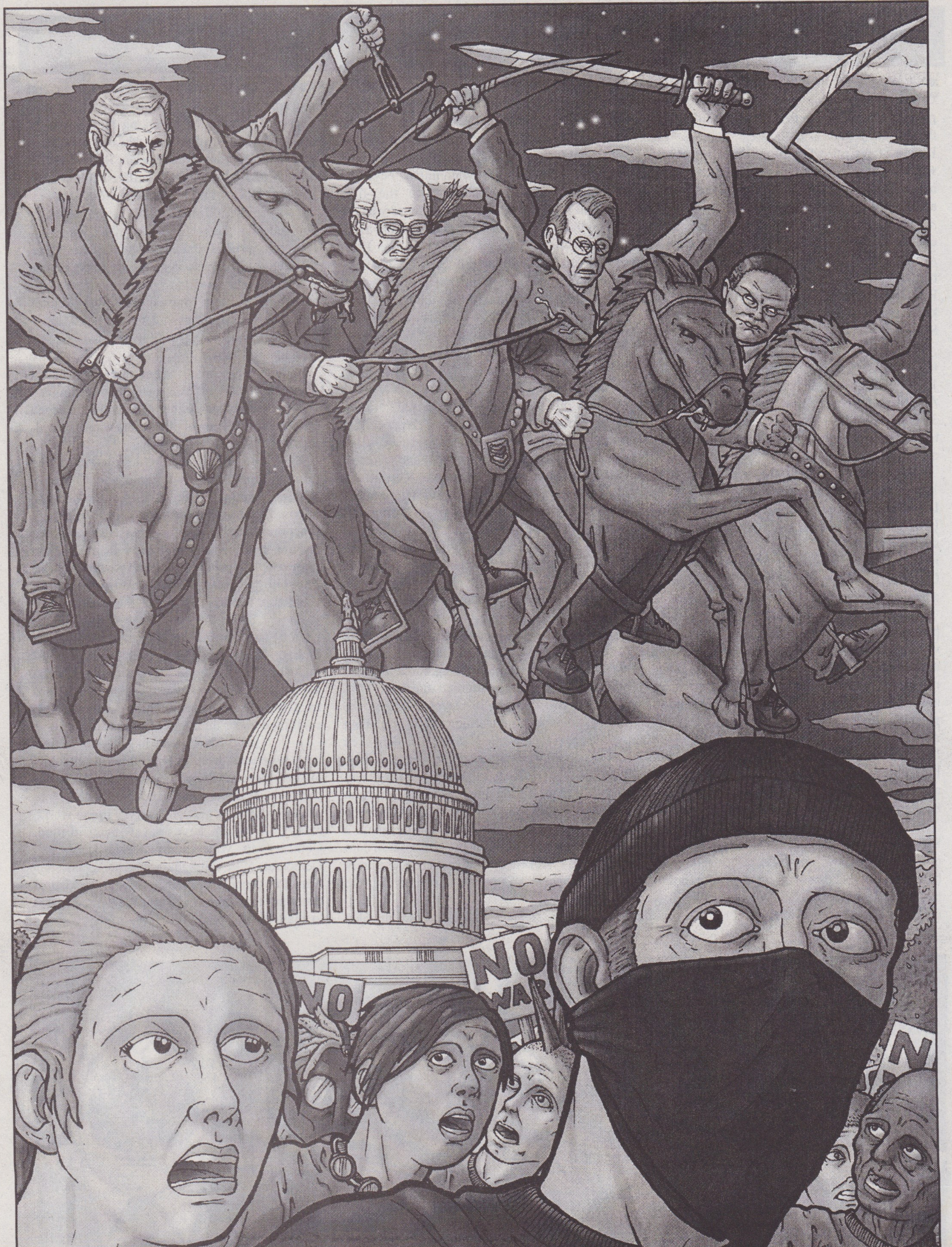
The United States also used illegal weapons in the Gulf War, including napalm and cluster bombs, and deliberately targeted alleged nuclear sites, chemical plants, and dams, according to the War Crimes Tribunal.

In addition to the destruction of Iraq through bombings and combat, the United States, together with the United Nations, imposed tough sanctions on Iraq in 1991. These sanctions have resulted in massive starvation, disease, and the deaths of more than a million Iraqi people, according to the Associated Press. The US has refused to allow the Security Council of the UN to overturn the sanctions.

Since the end of the Gulf War, the United States has maintained a massive presence in Iraq, flying daily trips over the American-imposed "no-fly zone." During the Clinton administration, Iraq was constantly bombed on a small but persistent scale. These bombings have continued under the Bush administration.

As Bush prepares to go to war against Iraq, Americans need to understand that the history of the conflict is rooted in the desire for control over the rich, oil-producing region. Iraq has the second largest oil reserves in the world, many of which have never been drilled. Contrary to what many Republicans and Democrats alike claim, the war is not against terrorism in general; but rather, against the kind of terrorism that does not permit the United States to share in its spoils.




NO
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WAR

THE AXIS OF EMPIRE

By Erik Farseth. Drawing by Michael Bukowski. Painting by Lydia Crumbley.

In September 2002, George W. Bush unveiled the new "National Security Strategy of the United States of America," a 33-page document outlining the Bush Doctrine of preemptive military action. America's official military strategy would now be to act whenever and wherever it felt its interests were being threatened, to strike first against so-called "rogue states" and terrorist nations, and to act as a global policeman.

It was not the first time that the President has chosen to go it alone. Over the past two years, Bush has unilaterally withdrawn the United States from the Anti-ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty and the Kyoto Protocol on Global Warming. He has infuriated the Russians and terrified the Chinese with his plans to build a "partial" missile defense shield capable of neutralizing China's tiny nuclear arsenal. He has flouted the Geneva Convention by refusing to recognize captured Taliban soldiers as Prisoners of War. He has sabotaged attempts to halt the small arms trade, and demanded American immunity from future prosecution for war crimes in the International Criminal Court. Now Bush wants the power to wage war whenever, and wherever he pleases, in direct defiance of international law.

The doctrine of preemptive military action laid out in the new National Security Strategy echoes similar sentiments expressed by the President during a speech delivered on June 1 at West Point: "If we wait for threats to fully materialize, we will have waited too long... We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge. In the world we have entered, the only path to safety is the path of action. And this nation will act... And our security requires all Americans to be forward thinking and resolute, to be ready for preemptive action..."

The so-called "Bush Doctrine" of preemptive war is the most radical revision of American foreign policy in over 200 years. It is one that could have profound consequences throughout the world. Even hawkish conservatives like Henry Kissinger have warned of the dangers of pursuing a policy of preemptive action. "It is not in the American national interest," Kissinger writes, "to establish preemption as a universal principle available to every nation."

If America were to establish such a precedent, what's to stop India from launching a preemptive nuclear strike against Pakistan? Or China from declaring war on its "wayward province" of Taiwan?

And yet the so-called "opposition party" has barely said a word. With the November elections just around the corner, and polls showing strong support for the nebulous "War On Terror," Bush's wartime agenda has gone largely unopposed. Time and time again, the Congressional Democrats have rolled over and played dead as the President continues to usurp the power of both the legislative and the judicial branch. Under the guise of "fighting terrorism," Attorney General John Ashcroft has made a mockery of the US Constitution, and yet it was the Democrats who helped confirm to Ashcroft in the first place, and Democrats who voted overwhelmingly in favor of the draconian "USA.-P.A.T.R.I.O.T. Act"—a law which has in effect repealed many of our most basic Constitutional protections.

By hook or by crook, Bush seems determined to go to war with Iraq—and he's not about to let Koffi Annan or the United Nations get in his way. Already, German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder, the so-called "moderate Arab states," France, and Russia have expressed their opposition to another Gulf war. The fact that Bush has explicitly rejected Iraqi offers to resume UN weapons inspections has further alienated many of America's former allies. It certainly didn't help matters when Bush said that addressing the United Nations General Assembly was like "speaking to a wax museum."

At least one member of the respected Nobel Committee has openly suggested that this year's Nobel Peace Prize was intended as an outright rebuke of George W. Bush's warlike posturing.

Virtually alone among America's NATO allies, British Prime Minister Tony Blair has enthusiastically endorsed Bush's foreign policy as a realistic solution to the festering Middle East conflict. Bobbing about like a smiling ventriloquist's dummy, Blair has made a point of running interference between "the Toxic Texan" and better educated leaders on the Continent. George W. Bush may not have been able to identify the leader of Pakistan during the 2000 election campaign (hell, he probably couldn't even find Pakistan on a map!), but Tony Blair is an experienced European statesman! Blair understands how to sell Bush's cockamamie vision to the rest of the NATO allies.

But why would a man who is widely viewed as Bill Clinton's English protégé be so eager to run around doing Dubya's bidding? Blair's "New Labor" may have come to power by co-opting the rhetoric of Thatcherism, but it remains at least a nominally "Left Wing" political party (or Center-Left, as the case may be). So how did the leader of the British Labor Party become such a simpering pro-American toady?

The British Empire is gone. As a dwindling world power, the British are deeply afraid of being completely absorbed by the European Union. By maintaining its "special relationship" with the United States, Great Britain is able to exercise power over the rest of the EU. And it achieves a kind of Empire-by-association; a pathetic role reversal in which Britain reaps the benefits of American imperialism through its status as a loyal vassal state.

While the French mutter darkly about American "hegemony," and outgoing Canadian Prime Minister John Chretien wonders if American militarism isn't actually the real enemy, foreign newspapers have begun to speculate about the existence of a "New Roman Empire" based in Washington.

With military bases in more than 40 countries, and a wartime budget larger than that of the other nine leading military powers combined, the United States is the sole remaining superpower, and world's first unchallenged hyper-power. On the battlefield, America's high tech weaponry reigns supreme. We patrol the oceans with the world's most powerful navy. We control the skies with invisible stealth bombers and a massive airforce. American culture is our leading national export. And our economic power continues to hold the entire world in thrall.

You are either with us, or against us.

It is an Axis of Empire.

In 1991, at the direct urging of the CIA, Iraq's Shi'ite and Kurdish minorities had risen up against the forces of Saddam Hussein, a rebellion that was brutally suppressed.

For months, American intelligence agents had been broadcasting propaganda messages aimed at encouraging Iraq's indigenous population to overthrow the government. Rise up against Saddam, they said, and we will give you full American support. Then came Iraq's humiliating defeat during the American-led Gulf War. 100,000 Iraqi soldiers were killed while they were retreating from Kuwait. Once again, the Kuwaiti oil wells were safe. Saddam's army had been neutralized.

Suddenly, the very same Americans who had been telling the Iraqis to revolt were no longer interested in helping to overthrow Saddam Hussein. An Iraq without Hussein was seen as a dangerous "power vacuum"; one that would "destabilize" the entire region. Turkey already had its hands full suppressing its own Kurdish minority. And a Shi'ite separatist movement in southern Iraq could strengthen the power of the mullahs in neighboring Iran.

An estimated 50-60,000 Shi'ites were killed during the rebellion.

As Iraqi reprisals continued, American officials openly talked about the dangers of democracy, and the need to replace Saddam Hussein with yet another Iraqi dictator. Above all, America wanted Iraq to be controlled by a strong central authority who could maintain order within the country but who was too weak to pose a threat to the surrounding oil kingdoms.

And so the Americans stood by and did nothing as a vengeful Saddam Hussein massacred the rebels they had pledged to support. Once again, the Iraqi people had been betrayed.

When asked why the Bush Administration was doing nothing to support the Iraqi rebellion, a Pentagon spokesman told the listeners of National Public Radio that "Our mandate was to free Kuwait. The US does not interfere in the internal affairs of a sovereign nation."

Of course, anyone who is familiar with the history of the Bush and Reagan years knows that this is bullshit. Just a few years earlier, the United States had been convicted and fined by the United Nations World Court after placing explosive mines in the Nicaraguan harbor (the US government refused to pay the fine, saying that the World Court had no jurisdiction).

For more than a decade, America had provided weapons and training to Contra rebels in Nicaragua, anti-Communist guerillas in southern Africa, and Muslim "Holy Warriors" in Afghanistan, all of whom were trying to take power by force. One of the first major actions of the senior Bush administration was an unprovoked American invasion of Panama. Seizing control of the capital, the US Army installed an American puppet government in place of former CIA henchman Manuel Noriega. Other Latin American nations refused to recognize the legitimacy of the puppet Panamanian president.

The idea that the US wouldn't dare to interfere in the affairs of a sovereign nation was simply ridiculous. The US interfered all the time. But this assertion went unchallenged. As is so often the case, respect for human rights was the least of America's concerns. Faced with mounting international criticism, the US was finally pressured into declaring an Iraqi "No Fly Zone" to prevent thousands of refugees from pouring into neighboring Turkey and Iran.

It is somewhat ironic, then, that the very same people who were responsible for sending thousands of Iraqi citizens to their deaths now claim to be so concerned about the welfare of the people of Iraq.

Much like America's disastrous covert war in Afghanistan—in which the US spent between $3 billion and $8 billion to arm and train future members of Al Queda and the Taliban—Republican foreign policy in Iraq has been a

edy of errors. A genocidal comedy of errors.

Throughout the 1980's, Saddam Hussein was actively being courted as a "pro-Western" American ally. If Iraq chose to use mustard gas during the war with Iran, that was no concern of ours. The important thing was to provide a bulwark to prevent the Iranian revolution from spreading throughout the entire region.

Having restored full diplomatic relations with Iraq for the first time in 15 years, the Reagan administration provided the Iraqis with American military intelligence to aid them in the war against Iran. America sold the Iraqis video surveillance and chemical analysis equipment. We provided them with biological materials. Reagan's cabinet approved the sale of $200 million worth of retro-fitted military helicopters; the very same Apache helicopters that Saddam Hussein's forces would later use to spray poisoned gas on the Iraqi Kurds. The now infamous gassing of the Kurds was "Made in America." And the Pentagon was fully aware of it.

By all accounts, the arming of Saddam Hussein and America's concurrent role in helping to train Muslim guerrillas in Afghanistan represents a total failure of Republican foreign policy. Years of covert operations have totally backfired and blown up in our face. Intelligence experts refer to this phenomenon as "blowback." And yet the Republicans have successfully managed to turn reality on its head and pin the blame for the current crisis on weak-willed "liberals" and Congressional Democrats.

To turn on the television is to tune-in to a fantasy world in which the villains of the Iran-Contra scandal have successfully recast themselves as defenders of human rights and heroes in the war on terrorism. So many outright lies, half-truths, and distortions have been put forth in the American media it is no wonder that the public continues to rally behind the President. Bush's handlers have spent much of the past 12 months trying to convince people that war is peace and freedom is a police state.

When asked why America is going to war now after 10 years of containment, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told the members of the Senate Armed Services committee, "What's different? What's different is 3000 people were killed."

Yes, by members of Al Queda, not Iraq.

Defense Policy Board Chairman Richard Perle is somewhat less forthcoming. "What evidence (of an Iraqi threat) do you need?" Perle recently told the Washington editor of *The Nation*. "Trust me." (Corn, David "Talking Iraq with 'The Prince of Darkness', Our Columnist talks with Richard Perle", TomPaine.com)

Try as they might, the Pentagon has been unable to establish a connection between Saddam Hussein and the events on September 11. This hasn't stopped President Bush—or members of the US Senate—from attempting to confuse the issue, portraying Iraq as an immediate threat to the safety of all Americans. Never mind the fact that Bush has failed to track down Osama bin Laden, the man actually responsible for the World Trade Center attack. Suddenly Iraq is to blame for promoting anti-American terrorism. It's the old bait-and-switch.

Having failed to provide any evidence of a link between Al Queda and Iraq, and with no concrete evidence that Iraq is even close to developing nuclear weapons, the Bush administration has been forced to come up with new justifications for an American invasion almost every week. First it was because of the war on terrorism. Then regime change. Then Iraqi support for Palestinian suicide bombers. Then weapons of mass destruction. Then terrorism again. And so on.

In March 2002, British Prime Minister Tony Blair pledged to release a "damning dossier" on Iraq's alleged nuclear program. However, it soon became clear that no new evidence had emerged, and the "damning dossier" was eventually shelved. In September, George W. Bush cited a report by the International Atomic Energy Agency, which claimed that Iraq was "six months" away from developing nuclear weapons. Unfortunately for Bush, reporters quickly realized that the supposed IAEA report doesn't actually exist.

While the threat of an Iraqi chemical or nuclear attack remains remote, the public is now thoroughly convinced that Saddam Hussein is the #1 threat to American security. Further proof that if a big lie is repeated enough times, it will eventually be accepted as the truth.

Given the Republicans' own close ties to the Iraqi government and jihadi warlords in Afghanistan, you would think that the American people would be demanding their resignation. But the short-term memory of ignorant Americans has made it easy for Right Wing hawks to cast a spell over the entire population.

According to the neo-conservatives' official version of the story, the "real" appeasers were not the men in the Reagan and Bush administration who approved the sale of millions of dollars' worth of military hardware, germs, and chemicals to Iraq. It wasn't the Reaganites who were guilty of "moral relativism" in the face of overwhelming evil. No, it was the human rights activists and liberals who tried to prevent the sale of such weaponry in the first place that are to blame for the continued existence of Saddam Hussein.

According Congressional records and the records of the CDC, the American Centers for Disease Control and a biological supply company called the American Type Culture Collection sent the Iraqi government samples of a wide range of deadly pathogens. These included samples of anthrax, six strains of botulinum toxin, Brucella Melitensis (a bacteria that damages major organs), West Nile Virus, gas gangrene bacteria, and other deadly diseases. The CDC claims to have sent these samples to the Iraqis in good faith; the toxins were supposed to have been used for legitimate medical research. Perhaps this explains why they were sent directly to the Iraqi Atomic Energy Commission. Nudge nudge, wink wink. Iraq later admitted that it had made biological weapons out of the materials supplied by the CDC.

When Senator Robert Byrd confronted Donald Rumsfeld about America's role in providing the Iraqis with deadly biological materials, the Secretary of Defense tried to deflect criticism by pretending to be offended by the question.

"I have never heard anything like what you've read," Rumsfeld told the US Senate. "I have no knowledge of it whatsoever, and I doubt."

Donald Rumsfeld's own role in helping to "create Saddam" had just made the cover of the Sept. 22 issue of *Newsweek*. In December 1983, Rumsfeld flew to Baghdad as a special US envoy where he personally met with Saddam Hussein and shook the dictator's hand. The meeting in Baghdad took place at a time when US State Department records show they were aware that Hussein had been using mustard gas in the war.

Newsweek had uncovered an embarrassing piece of history that the White House would just as soon forget.

"I have never heard anything like what you've read." Sure, you haven't.

The insidiousness of this Right Wing propaganda can be seen every evening on the Fox "News" Network. On one recent episode of the Fox news magazine "Hannity and Colmes," former Bush Cabinet member James Baker was also questioned about the *Newsweek* report linking the Reagan administration to Saddam's chemical and biological weapons programs. Baker's response says a lot about why the Republicans are winning the propaganda war: *"Oh, I can't believe we would have ever done such a thing."*

Well it doesn't matter whether Baker chooses to believe it or not, Reagan's support for Saddam Hussein is not a matter of debate, it is a historical fact. But so long as members of the current administration are allowed to get away with lying about the historical record, the American public will continue to be misled.

Few in the mainstream media are willing to challenge the Bush administration. Fewer still are willing to risk being labeled "anti-American" by questioning Bush's motives.

When former members of the Reagan Administration suddenly begin to talk about respect for human rights, you know they're up to something.

Their invoking the language of human rights puts Leftists in a difficult position. Are you against human rights, or something? That Saddam Hussein is guilty of horrendous crimes against humanity is without question. Few (if any) would defend the Iraqi regime. But will the Iraqi people be any better off if America decides to carpet bomb Iraq? What do the neo-conservatives really hope to gain by conquering Baghdad? Is human rights even part of their true agenda?

The gassing of the Kurds was a terrible event, and has become one of the leading justifications for "regime change" in Iraq. What kind of man would use poison gas against his people? But where were the Republican super-hawks at the time of the original massacre? Why, they were among Saddam's Hussein's best friends!

On September 12, 2002, Amnesty International distributed a press release in response to President Bush's speech before the United Nations. "Once again, the human rights record of a country is used selectively to legitimize military actions... The US and Western governments turned a blind eye to Amnesty International reports of widespread human rights violations in Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war, and ignored Amnesty International's campaign on behalf of the thousands of unarmed Kurdish civilians killed in the 1988 attacks on Halabja." (Amnesty International News Release, "Not in the Name of Human Rights")

After Saddam Hussein used poison gas against the Kurds in the town of Halabja using American Apache helicopters, Ronald Reagan tried to deny it. Then he blamed the Iranians. The President also blocked a congressional attempt to impose American sanctions on Iraq.

In 1989, Amnesty International criticized then-President George Herbert Walker Bush for his continuing support for the Iraqi regime.

Between 1982 and 1990, American companies sold over $1 billion worth of military hardware and "dual-use" equipment to Iraq. They did so with full approval of US Commerce Department.

Despite the deaths of 37 American servicemen killed by an Iraqi Exocet missile, the Reagan administration began attacking Iranian oil platforms and sending commandos to the Gulf region fight on behalf of Iraq.

But that all came to a grinding halt when Iraq invaded Kuwait, threatening America's access to oil. 5000 dead in Halabja were no concern of ours, but god help the man who messes with our oil! America's response to this transgression was swift and merciless. One of the first things America did was to mass US troops to protect the Saudi Arabian oilfields.

The media would have you believe that the Gulf War was fought to free the Kuwaiti people from tyranny. Nothing could be further from the truth. While Iraq is a military dictatorship, "free

Kuwait" is a hereditary monarchy. Better than Saddam Hussein, but hardly a victory for "freedom and democracy."

In the weeks leading up to the start of "Operation Desert Storm," the Kuwaiti royal family-in-exile took out a $10 million contract with the biggest public relations firm in Washington—Hill and Knowlton—to mobilize public opinion on behalf of the Kuwaiti government. In the fall of 1990, a 15-year-old Kuwaiti girl known only as "Nayirah" told the members of Congress that as a volunteer in a Kuwaiti nursery she had personally witnessed Iraqi soldiers ransacking the hospital, stealing incubators, and leaving 312 babies "on the cold floor to die." It was later revealed that Nayirah was actually the daughter of the Kuwaiti Ambassador to Washington. The girl had been coached to provide false testimony before Congress. The *Christian Science Monitor* reported that "seven US Senators later referred to the story during the debate; the motion for war passed by just five votes." (Peterson, Scott "In War, Some Facts Less Factual," *Christian Science Monitor*).

And America's allies in the region? A group of brutal dictators, medievalists, wealthy oil princes, and thugs. Respect for human rights was the least of our concerns.

In Saudi Arabia they still carry out executions by publicly beheading people with a sword. You know that old stereotype about having your hand cut off for stealing a loaf of bread? Dismemberment is still a part of the official Saudi Arabian penal code. "On 3 December 1999, for example, two men convicted of highway robbery each had a hand and foot amputated in the city of Tabuk." (Amnesty International Report: "Saudi Arabia, a Secret State of Suffering")

Women in Saudi Arabia are not allowed to drive cars. Children and teenagers may be punished by flogging for a wide range of nonviolent offenses, including "talking to women, whistling at them, trying to pass telephone numbers to them, and wearing transparent and women's style clothes." (Amnesty International Annual Report, 2002) The list of crimes punishable by death includes "witchcraft, apostasy, and drug offenses."

Israel ("the only democracy in the Middle East") has systematically denied both citizenship and independence to the Palestinians—a conquered people living under Israeli subjugation—while the so-called "Israeli Arabs" are treated as second class citizens.

There is no Bill of Rights in Israel. The right to own property is restricted. It wasn't until the Year 2000 that the Israeli Supreme Court finally outlawed housing discrimination against Israeli Arabs.

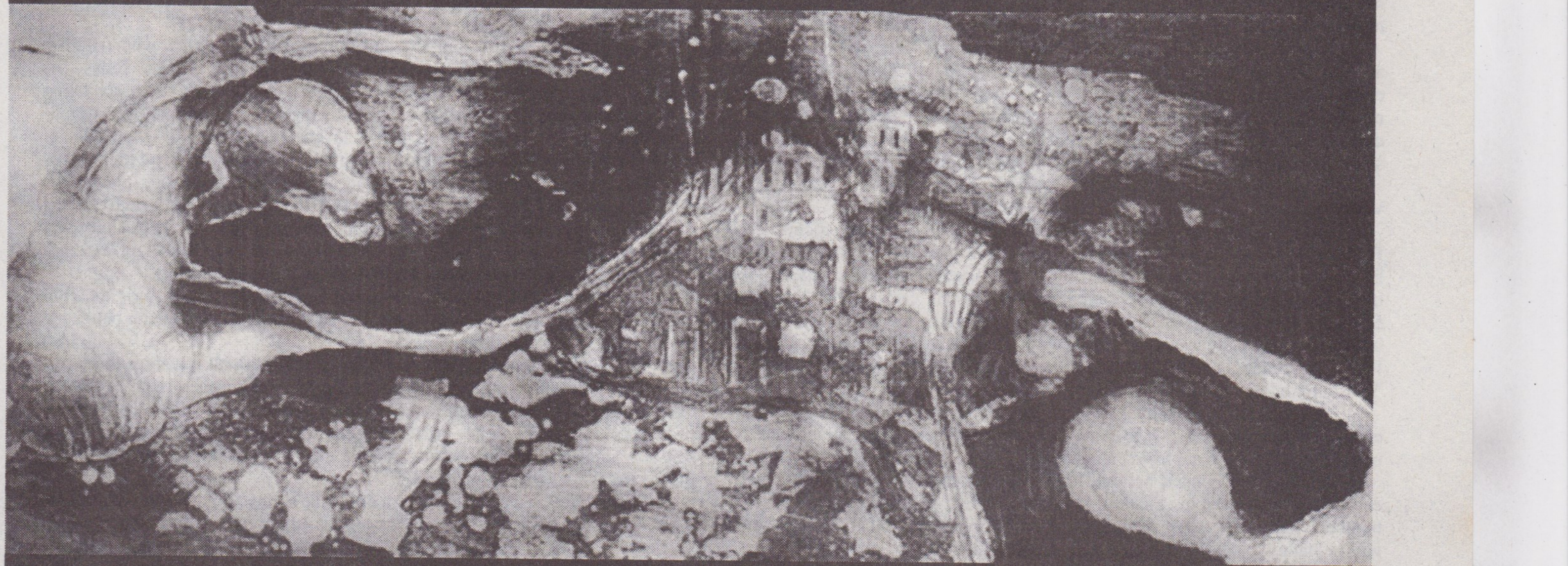
Palestinians are routinely subject to curfews that last for weeks on end. Those who wander out in search of food risk being shot by Israeli soldiers. Those who resist the Occupation by throwing stones at the Israeli Defense Force may find their homes being bulldozed. Whole families have been left homeless as a form of collective punishment.

During the occupation of Lebanon, Israel took civilians as hostages—some of whom were held for years in captivity.

These things are totally incompatible with democracy. Joel Kovel writing in *Tikkun* magazine ("A Jewish critique of politics, culture and society") has labeled Israel an Ethnocracy, because citizenship—and the right to vote—is based on religion and ethnicity.

Israel receives over a billion dollars in American aid every year.

Now tell me again about America's overwhelming concern for human rights.



Chief among the myriad justifications for going to war with Iraq is Iraq's (alleged) stockpiling of weapons of mass destruction. "Saddam Hussein is *pursuing* nuclear weapons! He may be 1-5 years away from developing a nuclear weapon!"

Now let's think about that for a moment: Saddam is *pursuing* nuclear weapons. That means he doesn't have one yet. And he is currently under an international trade embargo. Does this really pose an immediate threat to world security?

Pakistan on the other hand, already has nuclear weapons and it has actually threatened to use them. On October 8, Pakistan test launched a medium range Shaheen missile, a weapon capable of delivering a nuclear warhead into the heart of India. India has responded by speeding up its own missile program. With more than 1 million Indian and Pakistani soldiers currently trading fire along the disputed border in Kashmir, the world has never been so close to full scale nuclear war.

Does Bush think that Iraq poses a danger because nuclear materials "might" fall into the hands of terrorists? Well, what does he think is going to happen in Pakistan when the radical Islamists and Kashmiri separatists finally get their hands on a nuclear weapon? Can you say "nuclear martyrdom operation"?

We already know for a fact that the Pakistani intelligence agency maintained close ties with both the Taliban and Kashmiri rebels who have been conducting cross-border raids into Indian-controlled territory... Who do you think is guarding the nuclear reactors now in Pakistan? And what do you think is going to happen now that some of the more radical religious parties have been elected to the Pakistani government?

India and Pakistan have already come to the brink of nuclear war at least twice in the last decade. The two countries are clearly a threat to regional stability. But you don't see America getting ready to invade the Indian subcontinent. Instead, we've declared that the Pakistani dictator Parvez Musharraf is one of America's closest allies in the "war on terrorism."

A curious double standard exists with regards to nuclear weapons. Instead of pursuing a comprehensive strategy of nuclear disarmament, the United State would rather carve out exceptions for its allies and itself. Time and time again the US has imposed economic sanctions or threatened military action against so-called "rogue nations" for developing nuclear weapons, while turning a blind eye to French nuclear testing in the South Pacific and the continued presence of nuclear weapons in Israel.

With 200 nuclear warheads, Israel is the world's sixth largest nuclear power (*Jane's Intelligence Review*, 1994). For years, the Israelis have refused to abide by the Nuclear Nonproliferation agreement, and have refused to allow international weapons inspectors into Israel. In 1986, a former Israeli nuclear technician named Mordechai Vanunu was kidnapped in Italy and dragged back to Israel, where he was sentenced to 20 years in prison for providing the *London Sunday Times* with photographic evidence of Israel's secret nuclear arsenal.

By all accounts, the case for demanding inspections in Israel is much stronger than it is Iraq. In addition to possessing weapons of mass destruction, Israel has a long history of aggression against its neighbors. Israel invaded neighboring Lebanon in 1981, and continued to occupy that country for two decades. Israeli planes have bombed civilian targets, killed United Nations peacekeepers, and deliberately fired upon ambulances—killing innocent civilians, including children.

The Israeli occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip is in direct violation of two UN resolutions. Likewise, the continuing use of collective punishment (house demolitions, etc.), the targeting of civilian areas by helicopter gunships, and—until very recently—the state-sanctioned use of torture ("mild physical pressure") within the Occupied Territories are all in direct vio-

lation of the Geneva Convention and international law.

Israeli militarism is clearly a threat to regional stability. But don't expect to see Washington threatening to carpet bomb Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

The reason for this is quite simple. The impending war with Iraq isn't really stopping the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It isn't about terrorism, or regional stability. It is about establishing an American foothold in the Middle East that will free us from our dependence on Saudi Arabia. In a nutshell: it is about oil, and controlling access to oil.

On September 15, the *Washington Post* reported that American oil companies were already jockeying for position in hopes of cashing in on the Iraqi oil fields. With 112 barrels of proven oil reserves, Iraq has the largest oil fields outside of Saudi Arabia. "Its pretty straightforward," says former CIA Director R, James Woolsey. "France and Russia have oil interests in Iraq. They should be told that if they are of assistance in moving Iraq towards a decent government, we'll do the best we can to ensure that the new government and American companies work closely with them (Morgan and Ottaway, "In Iraqi War Scenario, Oil is Key Issue, US Drillers Eye Huge Petroleum Pool," *Washington Post*).

The Pentagon's Defense Policy Board Chairman, Richard Perle, is even more direct: "Forty thousand troops." That's all Perle thinks we'll need to seize control of the Iraqi oil fields in the north. "We don't need anyone else." (Corn, David, ibid)

According to one school of thought, the US is hoping to secure access to the Iraqi oilfields as the first step in an American invasion of Saudi Arabia. Many neo-conservatives have been itching to go to war with the Saudis ever since the terrorist attacks on September 11. As one headline put it: "Do we still need the Saudis?" (The answer, apparently, is "no.")

This summer, during a meeting of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board, a Rand Corp. analyst was quoted as saying that "Saudi Arabia supports our enemies and attacks our allies" and that the Saudis were "the kernel of evil, the prime mover, the most dangerous opponent in the Middle East." And, that unless the Saudi authorities put a stop to all anti-American and anti-Israeli statements, their financial assets and oil fields should be "targeted."

The *Washington Post* reported that this incendiary passage "represents a view that has growing currency within the Bush Administration."

Likewise, the Center for Security Policy—whose leadership includes the Pentagon's Doug Feith—claims on their website that "The so-called Middle East 'peace process' which began with secret Israeli-Palestinian negotiations in Oslo, has materially contributed to the present catastrophic situation. Successive concessions made in the name of advancing the 'peace process' by both Labor and Likud-led governments of Israel have not appeased demands for further concessions, only whetted Arab appetites for more." (Borger, Julian "Washington Hawks Get Power Boost," *The London Guardian*).

The solution, presumably, is to neutralize the Palestinians' key supporters and financial backers. Or to expel them from the West Bank, as some of the more extreme hardliners have called for.

Daniel Perle himself believes that the Palestinian-Israeli "log jam" will end after the US topples Saddam Hussein. Without Iraqi support for suicide bombers, and the in wake of such an overwhelming show of force, the Arabs will be happy to settle for whatever Israel is willing to give them.

For all its faults, Saudi Arabia continues to favor a Two State solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict. When the Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah put forward a peace proposal offering full normalization of relations with Israel in exchange for an independent Palestinian state based on the pre-1967 borders of Israel, Israel's hawkish Prime Minister Ariel Sharon balked at the unexpected gesture. There would be no peace negotiations until there was a permanent ceasefire, Sharon insisted, even as Israeli tanks began to re-occupy the West Bank.

When the Defense Policy Board briefing was leaked to the *Washington Post*, it provoked an angry and immediate reaction from the Saudis, followed by swift denials from Donald Rumsfeld that America was planning to suddenly turn on the Saudis. The Rand memo was simply "One person's opinion, not official US policy."

Whether this deliberate leak represents the actual feelings of the current administration, or if they are simply trying to frighten and intimidate the Saudis, the message was clear: you are either with us or against us.

For decades, America's relationship with the Saudi Arabia has been based on mutual self-interest. The Americans were perfectly willing to tolerate the "eccentricities" of the Saudi Arabian monarchy and to turn a blind eye to their flagrant human rights abuses so long as the Saudis kept up a steady supply of oil. All of that changed after September 11. Suddenly, the Saudi's religious fanaticism had become a liability: it was threatening American interests. Many within the Bush administration felt that the time had come to put the Saudis "back in their place." Add to this the conviction among many Evangelical Christians—including Attorney General John Ashcroft—that Muslims are "infidels," and you have all the ingredients for a full scale war in the Middle East.

Conservative commentator Ann Coulter was one of the first to fully articulate this new position. In her nationally syndicated column, Coulter wrote that "We should invade their countries, kill their leaders, and convert them to Christianity." Not wanting to be outdone, the *National Review* ran an article by Rich Lowry a few months later calling for the United State to nuke the holy city of Mecca. (Lowry later claimed that this was "only literary fantasy.")

In what has to be the greatest irony, a group of genuine Anti-Semites (George W. Bush himself once joked that the Jews were all going to go to hell) have allied themselves with the Right Wing government in Israel, in what is shaping up to be a clash of civilizations.

If the loony Evangelicals and neo-Conservatives have their way, the entire Middle East will soon be engulfed in a bloodbath.

During the first weekend in October, 2002, 1.5 million people in Italy marched to protest American military action. In mid-September, an estimated 200,000 people held a peace protest in central London. America's allies are dubious. The American public would rather give the UN weapons inspectors one more chance.

So why is Bush still planning to go to war?

As activists and journalists, we can try to educate the public.

But simply pointing out the hypocrisy of Bush's foreign policy is not enough. No amount of historical context or journalistic hand-wringing is going to prevent the impending American invasion. Bush doesn't give a shit about what they're saying on the editorial pages of *Le Monde* and the *London Guardian*—hell, he even refused to telephone the newly reelected Chancellor of Germany! Do you think Bush really cares about a handful of protesters in Berkeley?

The Left has never been particularly good at articulating an alternative political agenda. We all know that we are against an American invasion of Iraq, but what do we stand *for*? What do we actually believe *in*? That is the real question.

15 years ago, it was Leftists and human rights activists who (rightly) condemned the Republicans' complicity with Iraqi war crimes. Today, the political roles have reversed themselves, and it is "liberals" who are being accused of appeasing Saddam Hussein. This may be a grotesque over-simplification of the anti-war position, but it is one that carries of good deal of weight in the court of public opinion. When anti-war activists bend themselves into pretzels by denying that the gassing of the Kurds ever took place—the same massacre that Ronald Reagan tried to blame on Iran—progressives lose all credibility. When progressives are quick to embrace any sort of anti-war pronouncement, no matter how dubious the source (Henry Kissinger?!), don't be surprised when they have the rug pulled out from under them.

It *is* possible to be in favor of universal standards of human rights without wanting to go to war over oil, but the Left needs to do a much better job of articulating that message.

That Saddam Hussein is a brutal dictator is without question. As a former client state of three American presidents, the Iraqi government is diametrically opposed to everything that Leftists and anarchists believe in. That the Iraqi people would be better off without the Ba'athist government is obvious. But how does one work towards "regime change" in Iraq without providing fodder for Bush's war campaign?

Some would even argue that America has a duty to "take out Hussein" as a way of atoning for our previous foreign policy mistakes (e.g., Christopher Hitchens). While critics of the President's policies are correct in identifying the source of the problem as American imperialism, simply labeling Bush's actual agenda does nothing to diffuse the situation. Far more problematic is what to do instead.

Liberal democrats would have us wait for a "proper" UN resolution and then go into Iraq (now there's a solution!). Others have suggested that if the US simply dropped packages of food and medicine instead of bombs on Iraq, that the government of Saddam Hussein would fall within a year. Some just want to end the American economic sanctions. Still others have no solution whatsoever—they just don't want to go to war with Iraq. And then there are the crazies and conspiracy theorists. Unfortunately, what the public sees is nothing but a confused babble emanating from the Left.

One of the few attempts to articulate a Left Wing alternative was recently provided by Peter Tatchell, in the September 30 edition of the *Guardian*. A human rights campaigner, Tatchell has called on Western governments to support the indigenous Iraqi opposition parties while providing funding for things like pirate TV and radio stations. In place of a Western invasion, Tatchell would like to see the same sort of "people power" and civilian resistance that was previously used so successfully in places like the Philippines and Czechoslovakia—and if need be, guerilla warfare. It would be a much slower process than simply going in with guns blazing, but one that's a lot more likely to succeed.

While I don't necessarily agree with everything in Tatchell's article, it is a far cry from the sort of Manichean dualism that's become so prevalent in anti-war circles (to say nothing of the White House). As recent events have shown us, the enemy of my enemy is not necessarily my friend.

Can we trust Western governments to fund the Iraqi opposition? Of course not. Tatchell's plan could easily turn into another quagmire like the one in Afghanistan. The question is: do you have a better alternative?

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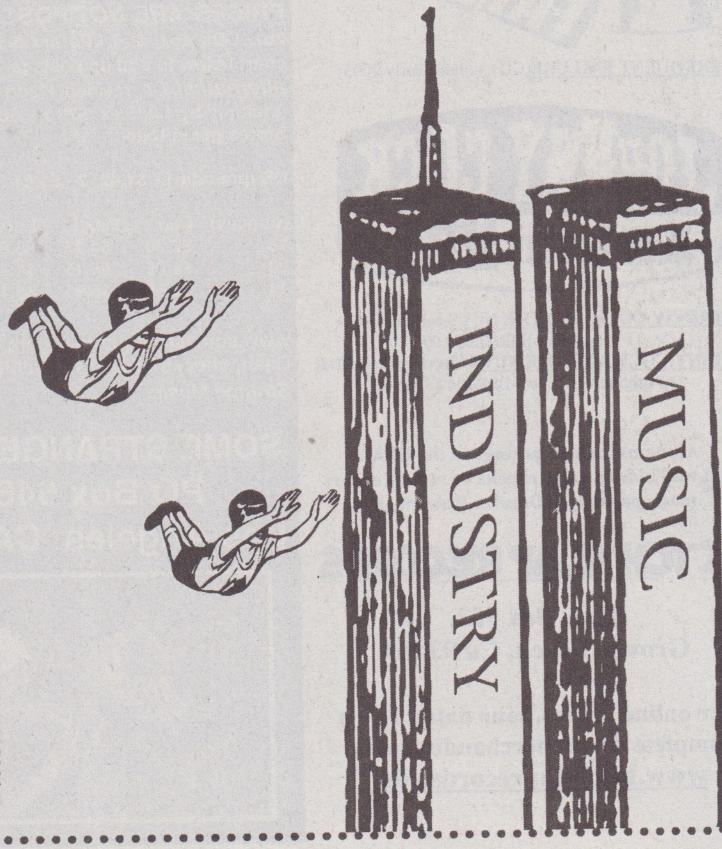

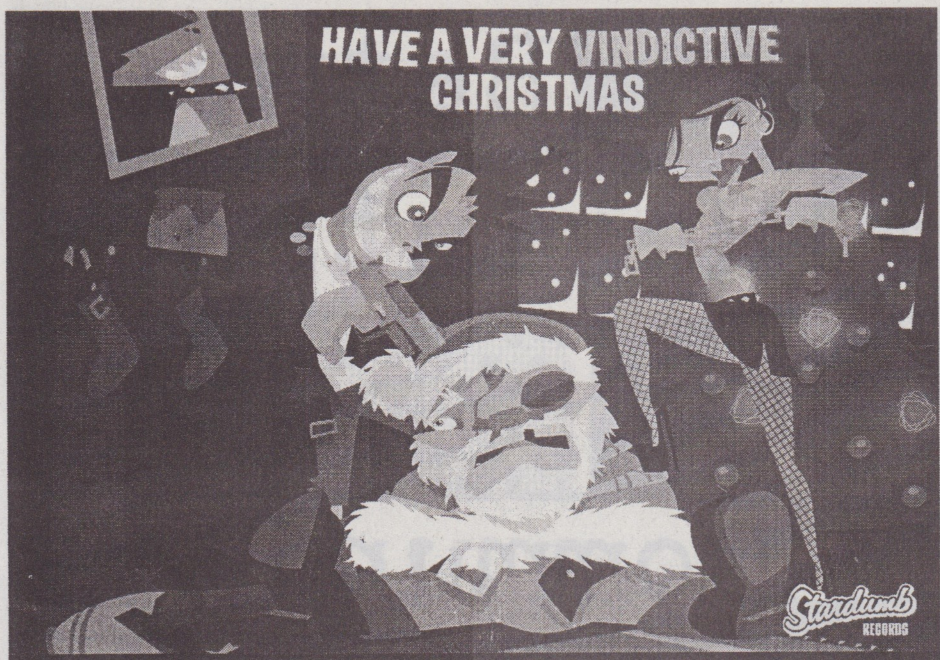

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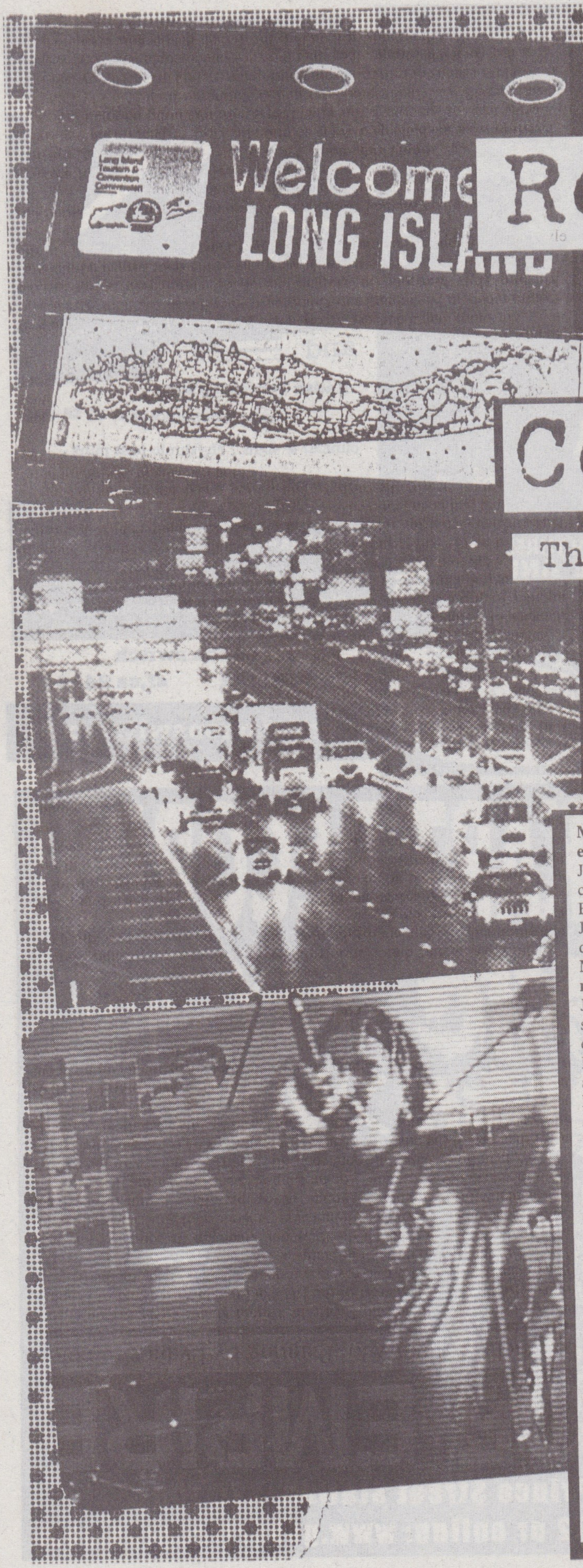
Between Resistance and Community:

The Long Island DIY Scene



Joe Carroll, Ben Holtzman and Jimmy Choi are three filmmakers who recently finished a documentary Between Resistance and Community: The Long Island DIY Scene. The film is an intimate, honest and inspiring portrait of DIY punk.

Interview by Carolyn Keddy

MRR: Please introduce the people taking part in this interview and what each did in the film Between Resistance and Community.

Joe: Joe, I was a producer, director, and editor on the film and I did most of the camerawork during shooting.

Ben: Ben, I was also a producer, director, and editor on the film.

Jimmy: Jimmy, I'm 21. I was a producer on this film and I did most of the production sound work during shooting.

MRR: What is your film history? How and why did you get involved in making films?

Joe: The three of us have been shooting video and making movies together since we were about thirteen years old. In the summer of 1997, after our sophomore year of high school, we took a video production summer course at Bennington College in Vermont. It was there that we really fell in love with and started to take serious the idea of making movies.

MRR: What other films have you made?

Joe: We made a short piece called Los Viejos Locos, which eventually aired on the HBO Family Channel. Later, both Jimmy and I decided to pursue filmmaking by attending film school, but I dropped out less than a year into it. The school I went to took everything out of filmmaking that I enjoyed. It turned it into just another trade to be learned. I was surrounded by people who were interested in using film as nothing more than a way of making money. So I dropped out to do my own work in film and *Between Resistance and Community* is the first thing to come out of that. I couldn't be happier.

MRR: What do you feel is film's place in the punk scene?

Ben: Unfortunately, film has had an undervalued and underutilized place in punk's history, given all that video has to offer. It really has not played a major role in punk's history, which I think is really unfortunate. It hasn't even been utilized as a means to really document punk, which was a real impetus in us deciding to do the documentary. We felt that there was a severe lack of documentation going on from within the punk scene. A number of people have tried to write or document punk, but most everything that comes from an outsider's perspective gets it wrong. Thus, we're very often left with a false sense or understanding of our own history, which can be detrimental for so many reasons. We fully believe that if punk is going to be properly documented, it is going to have to be done by those involved: and this documentary was created very much with those ends in mind. After we started pre-production, Martin

Sorrendeguy's brilliant documentary on Latino/Chicanos in punk, *Mas Alla de Los Gritos/Beyond the Screams*, came out, but before that, there wasn't a project like this, at least that we were aware of. Hopefully we created something that's not only informative, but also entertaining and fun to watch.

MRR: Your production company is called Walklor. What does it mean?

Joe: Walklor goes back to our time at Bennington College. Our first project was a video portrait of the disgusting bathrooms in our dorm. To emphasize just how gross the sink was we enlisted the help of a little bug to walk across the sink during a shot. In honor of our bug friend's great walking ability, we decided to name it Walklor. So, when we found out we needed a group name for our production class we decided on Walklor and the name has stuck ever since. Honestly, it was a lot funnier when we first came up with it six years ago.

MRR: How is the production company run? Who is involved? How do you decide who gets to direct, produce, edit, etc.?

Jimmy: We are pretty much what we've always been, a group of friends making movies together and having fun. We take what we do very seriously, but we certainly don't think of ourselves as a company. Walklor Productions is just the three of us and we've all always done everything together, in collective fashion. On this movie, Joe and Ben did the editing because I was going to school in NYC while Ben and Joe were up in Poughkeepsie. That was the most practical way of doing the editing and that's how we usually split up duties, by who has the time and ability to do each separate task.

MRR: What is the biggest challenge making an independent film?

Jimmy: There were a lot of challenges for us on this project. Money, as always, was a big concern. We've laid out over $7,000 so far on this movie. Working within the constraints of a small budget can be challenging but also definitely lends itself to creativity and finding ways to get around those obstacles. However, this project also totally emptied out all of our savings, which is something we're never going to be able to do again and something that is going to make our next project even more difficult. Another big problem is getting your movie out there and seen by people. Even getting it out in the DIY punk scene is a very difficult thing, especially a video as opposed to a record, which I think people would be more inclined to take a chance on. But we also always intended for this movie to be able to reach an audience outside of punk and DIY. We've entered a lot of festivals, which we've had some success with. Both distributing to the punk scene and entering festivals has cost us a ton of money as well. I don't want to say that it's all money because there are lots of other factors, but a lack of money will definitely limit what you're able to do to get your movie seen.

MRR: How was your film financed?

Joe: The documentary was completely self-financed. I was working two jobs for a while after I left school and basically saved every penny. Ben and Bunka also worked jobs whenever they were not in school. The summer we shot the documentary, the schedule was pretty much working nine to five everyday, and then ripping off the tie and either going straight to a shoot or a group meeting about the documentary. Our non-punk friends pretty much thought we were dead and after a few months of shooting, we thought we were too.

MRR: What have you learned film-wise through making this film?

Jimmy: We've definitely learned the value of money in making a larger-scale project such as this and how that can be limiting, or at least very challenging. We've also learned a lot about how to put together a documentary and how that differs from a narrative film. Knowing what we know now about editing and documentary storytelling, there are a lot of things, both technical and content-wise, that we would have definitely done differently. But I think that comes with just about any film and every time is a learning process, whether it's your first film or your fiftieth.

MRR: Why did you decide to make a film about the Long Island DIY scene?

Ben: Starting in the summer of 2000, the three of us began talking extensively about how we wanted to do a serious video project, either a narrative or a documentary, starting the following summer. We had all been working in video for a number of years and were anxious to try a large-scale project, which we could really throw ourselves into and devote ourselves to. We talked about different ideas for months and months, without really coming up with a project that we felt was interesting, viable, and important. Then, one day in December we were all home on break from school and we went to a show at Ren's house; a scene which we had been a part of for a number of years. It was one of Contra's last shows, an absolutely incredible band that were pioneers of the Long Island DIY scene. It was a really inspiring, incredible show, a basement full of kids who we thought were doing some pretty amazing things. We talked the entire ride home about how the scene of which we were already a part, the Long Island DIY scene, was exactly the type of project we had been looking for.

MRR: Long Island is pretty big, isn't it? Are there other DIY scenes? Why did you choose to focus on this one, these bands, exclusively?

Ben: There are a number of other projects/scenes on Long Island who could definitely be considered DIY or who are "doing it themselves" which we didn't focus on. One main reason was just practicality and trying to ensure that the documentary had a tight focus. We did about six months of pre-production work, before we even shot one minute of footage, and a lot of that time was spent deciding, with all the many different scenes and projects going on in Long Island, what exactly we were going to cover. We eventually decided that if we were really going to give our subject matter extensive treatment, we had to narrow our focus to as great an extent as we could. Thus, we decided to focus exclusively on the scene we were most involved with, what's most often referred to as the "Long Island Do It Yourself Scene." Like most places, Long Island has many scenes, often cut up into genres: with an "emo scene, hardcore scene, punk scene, etc." However, the scene we documented was literally referred to as "the DIY scene," with bands that were drawn together more by an interest in building community and creating a form of resistance rather than by a common musical sound.

MRR: How do you define DIY?

Ben: Well, we try not to; it's a really vague and vast word. For instance, it's a term that has totally been mainstreamed and adapted, often in very strange ways. I walked downstairs to find my mom watching a television, where they kept on talking about "DIY, DIY," but the premise of the show was people who bought million dollar homes and fixed them up into multi-million dollar homes. Seriously. Though there's not necessarily any dictionary definition that I'd like to adhere to, I'm pretty sure that's not an inspiring example of DIY, to me at least. I can say that what is probably most appealing to me about DIY is the notion that you have the ability and voice to actually do things yourself. You don't need a corporation or a movie studio to do everything for you; you have the ability to go out there and create something which is just as (and very often more) brilliant than what corporate or mainstream culture has been trying to sell you. Growing up in this society we're often taught to remain passive, inactive, and conformist; to spend our time either consuming or in activities by which we are supposed to be "entertained." I think the most valuable thing about DIY is that it encourages the exact opposite of this, that you (or, even better, you and a group of people) can create, express, resist, reclaim.

MRR: Were there ever moments in the filming where the people involved (either the filmmakers or the subjects) did not agree on the aims of the film?

Jimmy: We never had any major internal disagreements about the film during the process but there were many times when the scope of the film itself changed. We shot over seventy hours of footage and throughout shooting and editing, we would constantly re-evaluate certain aspects of the film and how certain things would be handled. There were many aspects of the scene that we had in mind to cover before we started shooting that never made it in. Just to name a few examples, we had wanted to do segments on both Kill Your Idols and shows going on outside of basements, but neither of those ever fully panned out. We had shot some footage for those segments; lots of stuff outside of basements and even a Kill Your Idols set at CBGB's, but a lot of the footage just didn't seem to fit in. At the same time though, there were also several things that came up during the shooting that we hadn't intended to cover that became really significant, such as the whole sequence revolving around the weekly kickball games. Overall though, we were generally in agreement about what the aims and goals of the film were going to be.

As far as the people in the scene who were in the film, while they were generally supportive of the whole thing, they didn't have too much interest in what we would specifically be doing with the film. Aside from a few exceptions, people generally cooperated with what we asked of them and left us to handle the filmmaking, which again was not the community type experience that we had envisioned but something we came to understand.

MRR: What was the reaction from the bands and people that appeared in the film?

Ben: It's been very positive, but also with some criticism. We had an initial screening at an amazing independent theatre on Long Island, where we were totally blown away by the response, with over 200 people coming and selling out the show. The feedback we received from that was pretty overwhelmingly positive. Since then, we've heard a few different things from some people in the scene.

MRR: What about people, who were not involved in the film, but are involved in the scene?

Ben: I guess the criticism that has made its way to us the most is that some people in the scene feel the documentary is "not complete enough." I guess that's a valid criticism. As much as we had narrowed our focus and scope of the documentary before we started shooting, it was still extremely difficult to encapsulate an entire scene, even one as small as the Long Island DIY scene and fit it into a 45-minute documentary that would be worthwhile for people to view. There was a ton of stuff that, unfortunately, had to be left out. We shot full time for over four months, over 70 hours of footage, and, after many, many different, longer, less successful rough cuts, it finally made it into a 45-minute documentary that we were happy with. I guess we can understand the criticism from certain people in the scene, particularly because the scene is so personal for people. We've never heard or read that from someone outside of the scene

though, which has been a pretty good sign, that for people who are less attached to the subject matter, we're at least relatively successful in giving a comprehensive and entertaining look at DIY, punk, and the Long Island scene.

MRR: Are you happy with the result?

Joe: I think we're all actually very happy with the final results. However, every time we see it, we talk about something we would change. Of course, that's probably true of anything you devote so much of your life to.

MRR: What are your favorite parts?

Joe-As far as favorite parts goes; I'm really fond of the section where Tommy and Chris from On The Might of Princes are discussing their tour troubles. It starts as an amusing story, but quickly degenerates into a nightmare of a tour. In addition, it really shows the problems of sustainability for a DIY band. It was also one of our biggest triumphs in editing and a pretty good example of what editing was like. We love those guys, but it took them about half an hour to tell their story, it was told completely out of order, they talked all over each other, and went on tangents in the middle of important facts. We edited that conversation for days constantly paring it down and rearranging it until finally we had a two-minute section that flows really well and I think it is an important part of the documentary.

MRR: What do you wish you were able to include, but couldn't?

Joe: What I wish every time I see the documentary is that there were more women in it. I think the lack of women in the film speaks a great deal about ourselves and our scene. Like a lot of punk scenes, the Long Island DIY scene tends to be male-dominated. It's mostly males who make up the bands, put on shows, etc. and this fact is definitely reflected in the documentary. I wish there were not only more women in the scene, but more Latino, black, Asian, queer, anything but straight, middle-class, white males in the scene. However, I can't deny that the lack of women in the documentary is, to an extent, also our fault. We could have tried to involve more women in the project, as there were women in the scene, who did not have a voice in the documentary. But we were concerned about creating a false representation of the gender inequalities of the scene. Thus, we had hoped that the lack of females in the documentary would speak loudly about the lack of gender balance. However, in retrospect we should have allowed the documentary to be a forum for women themselves to speak their views on the scene.

MRR: What do you feel has been achieved by making this film?

Joe: Our goals, which I think we've achieved, were twofold. For one, we wanted to document our scene, to create a record of it for the future. I believe that punks are the ones who should be writing their own history. I mean, who in the world is more qualified? If we're going to look at ourselves as a culture, then we need a history that we can both critique and learn from. Our second goal was to not only make a film punks would enjoy, but to make something that would be accessible to an audience outside of the punk scene. We wanted to show that not only do we have a problem with what is going on in the world, but we're trying to do something about it too. I think youth in general, along with punks, are often looked at very cynically by people. We're trying to show the other side of the coin.

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the filmmakers

MRR: You mention on your website you have been involved in punk for over 8 years. Since many people believe punk went mainstream around 1992, how do you deal with or answer the older punks who might accuse you of not really knowing what punk is?

Joe: Quite frankly it's hard for me to take anyone seriously if they are going to invalidate someone's opinion on punk because they were exposed to it through Nirvana or Green Day. Punk constantly needs to be infused with new voices and new ideas or else it will become stagnant and irrelevant. However, I'm not saying the past should be ignored. I think it's very important for punks to take a look at what's come before and either build on it or change it. That's one of the reasons we made the documentary. It's a chance to see what one group of kids has done, both their successes and their failures, and use that as a learning tool. I think it's really important that punks document their history for that very purpose.

MRR: Do you feel there is a difference between punks in the 70s/80s and the punks in 2002? Why?

Joe: Though there are probably many differences between the punks of the 70s and 80s and the punks of 2002, I believe there are some substantial similarities. They are people who are unhappy with things they see in the world, at large, who have banded together, both to create something in opposition to those things and to change them as well.

MRR: Why do you feel punk is still a relevant movement? How do you disassociate yourself and your scene from major label punk bands like Blink 182? Do you find people try to lump it all together?

Ben: I think that it's not so much most people lumping Blink 182-type punk into more political or DIY punk, but rather that most people don't even know that political or DIY punk exists and think that Blink 182 is all there is! I think that's really unfortunate. Punk has done a tremendously good (i.e. bad!) job at pigeonholing itself. I don't know that this is always the best attitude that punk should have. I don't feel that punk is for the masses or anything like that. But, I think the real relevance of punk is when we take all that we've learned from our involvement in the scene and attempt to bring it outside of the scene to affect change, through things like Food Not Bombs, fighting for community spaces, or putting on anti-sexism workshops. A lot of times I hear punks say, "we have to concentrate on fixing the scene first before we can change the outside world." Well, I think that's definitely true to an extent, but I also think that a lot of the time that sentiment can be used as an excuse to just focus on punk, the scene, or personal relationships, and to not work on things that are going on in the outside world.

MRR: Why is signing to a big independent label like Revelation considered the same as signing to a major label? Would people react the same way if On The Might of Princes were signed to Dischord or another reputable indie who also

happened to release some records by bands that went on to be on major labels?
Ben: I actually think the reaction would have been even harsher had OTMOP signed to an actual major. However, a lot of people in the scene view a label like Revelation Records as having pretty similar policies as those that majors have, in that they essentially turn something which could be a viable form of creating community and building resistance (punk) and turn it into a product to sell to people. A lot of people involved in the scene take serious issue with this "moving units" mentality, which is what a lot of these larger labels seem to be all about. But at the same time, I don't think that people view all "larger" labels the same. For instance, it would be my guess that people probably would have reacted vastly different had OTMOP been offered a contract from Dischord. Even though that label is pretty huge, a lot of people view it a lot more in line with trying to accomplish a bit more than moving units.
MRR: Is your personal reaction to this the same one that is expressed in the film?
Ben: It was our goal in the documentary to present both sides of the debate that went on when OTMOP was initially offered the contract. Most people seem to feel that we were successful in doing this, which we're pretty happy to hear. On the personal level, I think the three of us feel sort of mixed about it. On one hand, we understand that OTMOP wants to make a living off of their band. I mean, who the hell are we to voice objection to signing to a label that might help them accomplish their dream? At the same time, I am not sure that any of us are exactly inspired by the type of mentality that Revelation seems to have in terms of the commodifying of punk. They seem to be a music label, which tries to sell as many records as possible, which I guess isn't anything different than what they ever claimed to be. I don't think it was right for anyone to tell OTMOP that they "couldn't" sign to Revelation, but I do think people had every right to voice criticisms of a label like Revelation, so long as they attempt to understand OTMOP's side (which, unfortunately, a lot of people initially did not even attempt to hear).
MRR: How is everyone reacting now that On The Might of Princes have signed to Revelation? Do people attend their shows in Long Island? Are they still allowed to play Ren's and the Vargas house?
Ben: Well, everything that we shot in the documentary was done over the summer of 2001; so many people's opinions have changed since that time. At first, a lot of kids claimed that they would not support OTMOP anymore, and both Ren and the Vargas kids said they wouldn't want OTMOP to play at their spaces again. However, a lot of good discussion and dialogue (which was often painful and sometimes got ugly), took place over the months following the signing, which resulted in a lot of kids understanding the positions of the members of OTMOP and, eventually, still supporting them in a variety of different senses, even if they retain their thoughts on Revelation as a label.
MRR: My parents would have never let me have shows in their house. How did Ren and the Vargases work that out, why is Mrs. Vargas so understanding? She must be the coolest Mom.
Jimmy: That's funny because we had a review in the New York Sun where the reviewer said the same thing, describing the movie as being about "the coolest mom in the world," among other things. But, again, it's unfortunate that we weren't able to have interviews with either group of parents in the documentary, but one of the most telling things that Ren's father said to us was that the house was just as much Ren's as it was his. And just as he could go down to the kitchen and make a cup of coffee, Ren could go down to the basement and have a show. And that was pretty much it. As far as Mrs. Vargas went, I think that she felt much that these were a group of kids that were doing something really positive and allowing them this space would give them, in a variety of senses, a place. She respected the kids who came to the shows, never talked down to us, and always treated us well. They're no longer doing shows at the Vargas house for a variety of reasons, but that was actually the kid's choice, not the parent's.
MRR: What's been happening with the other bands since this was filmed?
Joe: Well let's see, Latterman are still together and have just released a new full length (which, by the way, I think is fucking amazing) on Traffic Violation Records. The Insurgent just sort picked up and moved to Boston, though I still see them around on the Island a lot. Porcelain Decay played their last show this summer due to some members moving away and going to school. Sometimes Walking, Sometimes Running also played their last show over the summer, but a new band with three of the four members has formed called Scent of Human History. And On the Might of Princes have cut back on touring and the amount of shows they have been playing in order to concentrate on their debut album from Revelation.
MRR: Where will people be able to see Between Resistance and Community?
Jimmy: Our next scheduled screening is at ABCNoRio in NYC on September 19th. We'll be screening with another awesome independent documentary, "Hot and Bothered: Feminist Pornography" by Becky Goldberg. After that, we'll be screening at the Stop, Look and Listen Festival at Two Boots in NYC at the end of October. We also just got accepted to the Hamptons International Film Festival in the middle of October. It's a huge festival and it's sort of intimidating for us but it'll definitely be some sort of experience, and at the very best an opportunity to screen the documentary to a lot of people who'll have no connection to punk or DIY at all. We keep an updated list of screenings on our website at www.walklor.com as well. The VHS version, which was a split release between Traffic Violation Records and us, is out now also. People can order it from us directly for ten dollars post-paid or check the Traffic Violation Records site at www.trafficviolation.com for info on ordering it from distros. We're also planning a college tour in the fall and we'd also love to do any screenings, possibly a full tour, so if anyone's interested in helping to set up screenings, please get in contact with us.
MRR: Are you working on any more films? What will be your next project?
Ben: A lot is sort of up in the air right now. This past spring we did a shitload of pre-production work on a documentary that was going to be on queer youth on Long Island, but that sort of fell apart for a variety of reasons. Hopefully, we can get back to that one at some point down the line. When that one died, we had planned to take a good deal of time and plan out the next project and hopefully come up with something over a few months and then do about six months of pre-production work before we started shooting in May of 2003. One of the ideas we had been exploring was to do a documentary on a project going on in Long Island, called Freespace, which is going to be this incredible community center (infoshop, bookstore, venue, Independent Media Center, Free School, etc.) that a small group of absolutely incredible and committed activists on Long Island are trying to open. However, as we got further and further into dialogue with the people working on Freespace, we realized there was no way we could wait another nine months to start shooting. There was too much going on in that time, including the opening of the doors of the space, which will hopefully happen in early 2003. So, we're defying all sense of logic and starting shooting with about three weeks of pre-production work! We're pretty nervous about the project, and it's happening all too quickly, but we're also pretty fucking excited, because if everything goes right, we think it can be an absolutely awesome project (which will also hopefully help out the space!).

There are still about a million things we need to work out with this documentary, not the least of which is funding. After losing thousands of dollars on Between Resistance and Community, we realize that we can't afford to do that again, so we're going to be trying really hard to come up with funding. If anyone has any funding ideas or ways they can help, we would absolutely be thrilled to hear about them. We also wanted to note that we are always extremely interested in hearing from people. We'd love to hear what people think of Between Resistance and Community, both the good stuff, as well as any criticisms. Further, we'd absolutely love to hear from other people who are out there doing any type of DIY video/filmmaking. We are extremely interested in hearing about other people's work By the way, it's high time we built an international DIY film/video network, not unlike the one presently centered around music. Please get in touch with us at documentarykids@hotmail.com, we'd love to hear about the work that anyone is doing!
MRR: Would you consider a follow up to Between Resistance and Community to see what has happened to these bands in ten years? What are your predictions of what will happen?
Joe: We've thought about the idea of a follow-up, because without a doubt, punk does tend to be a youth movement. It would be really interesting to see not only those who dropped out and became lawyers, but what ideals from punk that people have incorporated into their lives. Undoubtedly, a lot of people in the scene will not stay "punk" for the rest of their lives, but I do definitely see some people in it for the long haul who are working to make DIY and punk more sustainable, which is especially difficult on Long Island.
MRR: Where do you see Walklor Productions and yourselves in ten years?
Jimmy: As far as Walklor goes, we'll have a review in Film Threat in the coming months which will no doubt vault us to the top of the hipness charts all around places like LA, Park City, and Cannes. Riding on that, we'll have a smashingly successful and thoroughly coked-out college tour, which will wrap up at the Hamptons International Film Festival with an all-night heroin binge that will leave at least two of us dead. The surviving member of Walklor will then undoubtedly continue to manipulate the other two people's corpses (a la Weekend at Bernie's) to collect all three paychecks and leave time for last-minute will revisions before dumping the bodies over a cliff in a van full of explosives. But in ten years, Walklor will certainly be one of the highest performing stocks on the NYSE after branching out from documentary films to chemical weapons and biotech research. Walklor-Tech will then attempt to create the world's first sentient worldwide computer network, known as SkyNet, which will quickly become self-aware and eventually destroy human life, as we know it.

If you want to order a copy of the documentary from us, they are $10ppd. Just write us at 950 Hart St., Studio 103, Brooklyn, NY 11237 and make the checks payable to Joseph Carroll.
documentarykids@hotmail.com

what happens next?

BRAZILIAN TOUR DIARY PART 2

as told by craigums

photos by karoline collins

(When we last left our heroes they had just embarked upon the fourteen hour long trip back to São Paulo after spending some time at the beach... if you missed the first half...
well I guess you better order issue #234 huh?)

Day 9: I am Yellowman.

At 3am we stopped at a random bus stop for a pee. The janitor was busy going from stall to stall mopping and wiping and flushing, and all the while scatting some awesome song I could only assume was born from some sort of indigenous dialect. I washed my hands slowly and then leaned against the counter listening. His song was a melodic rapid-fire delivery of harsh syllables and tuneful breaths that all culminated into a catchy refrain that almost sounded familiar. I walked back to the bus with the infectious melody stuck in my head and not until I was right on the verge of sleep that I realized the tune was **N'Sync**'s "Larger than Life."

We arrived in São Paulo during morning rush hour and met with our next liaison that sported white pants, a peach fuzz mustache, and a greased-down ducktail hairstyle. Devon said he looked like a "procurer" from the Mission district; I was thinking more along the lines of a pool hall speed dealer. Either way, he (Tata was his name), started off on the wrong foot by leading six tired and grumpy people (and all their luggage and merch and equipment) back and forth through the huge São Paulo bus terminal trying to find the way back to the van he'd rented. What's worse was that the van actually turned out to be a bus that was going to cost us severely more than we were prepared to pay.

There was still some unknown business that had to go down before we could leave so I went with Nino and Daniel to trek for some water and a bathroom. Like so many neighborhoods surrounding bus stations, this barrio was scary even at 6am. For one, it was dirty beyond description; Chinese restaurant dumpsters are cleaner (and smell better) than the streets we traversed looking for a place to pee. A restaurant selling fake jewelry and dilapidated furniture let us use the bathroom, but only if we "kept it clean." I thought they just didn't want us smearing feces on the walls, but after using their toilet and seeing feces smeared not only on the walls, but on the ceiling as well(!), I figured they meant they didn't want us shooting up or establishing glory holes.

We finally got going by 7am and had an uneventful ride, thankfully. But you know you're desperate for food when you buy things just because they're "vegan." Case in point: Robert bought a bag of synthetic pork rinds this afternoon which were probably less healthy than real pork reins. I wouldn't be surprised if the bag they came in was more healthy.

Late afternoon we arrived at the Backstage Studios in Londrina. It was an awesome little place that rented a practice room (with equipment) and sold punk rock records and clothes. I bought a belt with YOUR FACE embossed on the buckle. I went to put the belt in my bag on our bus but the bus was gone. Our hired driver (who keeps money paper-clipped to his driver's license in case he's pulled over by police) brought a lady-friend along. I figured they went to find someplace private where ten stinky punk rockers weren't going to constantly board and disembark their bus for trivial things like putting a belt away. Others in our camp were concerned they had fled town with all our stuff.

The Backstage fellows made us a meal and offered up some places to nap. I was already crashed on the couch in the lobby when a woman who was quickly dubbed Nina (as in "a female Nino") started yelling for me to sleep in one of the bedrooms. I didn't know she was yelling at me, I only heard her repeat the words "yellow man" over and over until I pried my eyes open.

I looked down to see that I was wearing the yellow shirt Mama had given me. I asked her with equal parts broken English and sign language, "Oh...you...want me...sleep in room?"

"Not with me. Yellowman alone!" she replied haughtily, then followed up with a slap on my shoulder.

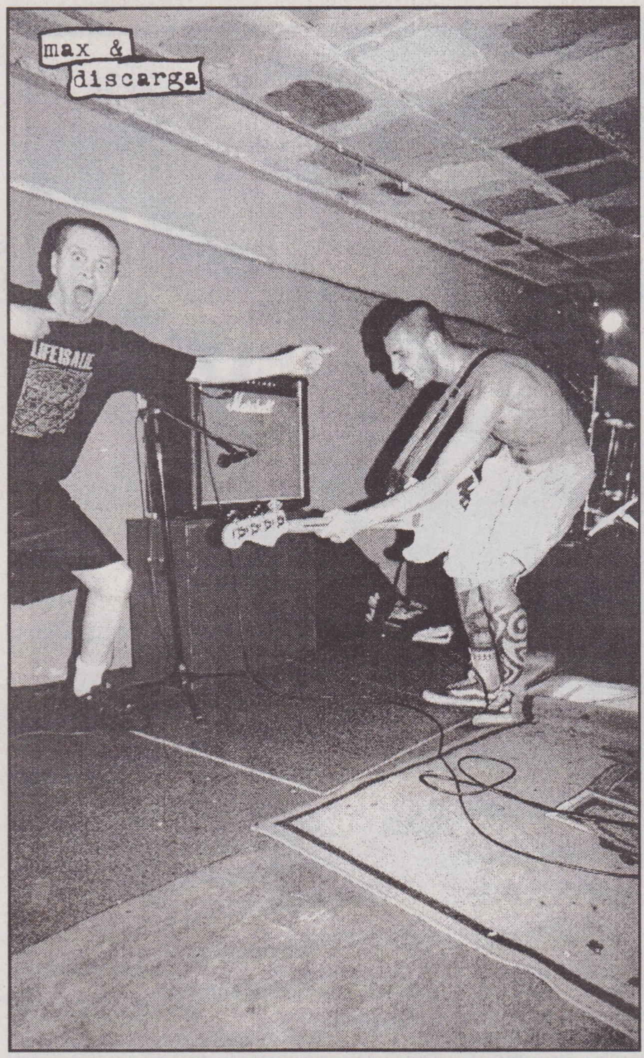
I slept soundly and woke up with Devon lying next to me. Someone came in and invited us to walk around town, which we did. We circled a park the size of five city blocks among Asian-, African- and European-Brasillians all well-dressed and fit. Max said he felt like we were in Burlingame, the yuppie central of Silicon Valley.

Our bus was parked in front of the Backstage when we returned setting to rest fears that our driver and his *amiga* had sold it and eloped. We rolled on to tonight's venue, Chapadáo (which I'm told translates to "very drunk"), where we were to share the bill with **Trauma Acoustico, Overwhelm,** and **Discarga**.

I missed the first band because I couldn't get past all the people to get inside. They sounded good and everybody came out smiling when they were done. *Everybody*, by the way, was a very affluent crowd: the majority of the guys were well-dressed, well-liquored, and tall; the majority of the girls were done-up, "enhanced," and looked like underwear models. And everybody looked older, like "my age" old (not "Devon's age" old—that's *really* old).

While **TA** rocked I hung-out by the snooker table with three locals. They had no interest in the punk rock band playing inside their bar, or punk rock in general for that matter. And they were far and away the *chapadáo*-iest bunch in attendance. I had the feeling that when the bar closes they sleep in the bushes next door and wait for the next day to arrive.

I flipped for a few games and one-by-one the locals bought me drinks. One guy would hand me a drink and then I'd just pass it on to one of his friends. I think they thought I was buying them drinks but in reality they were just buying each other drinks.



max & discarga

robert & mozine

We communicated mostly through physical expression (they even had slurred body language) but they did manage to pick up one word of English. Sadly, that word was Yellowman. Thanks, Nina.

When **Overwhelm** played I found a loose window pane on the side of the stage that I could open and watch the band through. They played a hyper cross between hard-rock and hardcore. I had to stop bobbing my head as it limited my view of the band through the small window space.

When they finished Nina pulled me aside and started a genuine conversation. She told me her name was Anna which in my head quickly became Anna-Noying. I asked where she learned English and she said that her friend taught it and they liked to speak together. She then whirled around to a group of ladies, pointed one out to me and said, "This is my friend, Tha. She's the one who teaches English. Go ahead, talk with her! Now!"

She disappeared and I was left with Tha who began our conversation with an apology for Anna whom she described as "crazy." Seeing eye-to-eye right out of the gate, Tha and I talked for a while about a bunch of nothing but it was nice to speak English with someone new for a change, and she said it was nice to practice. She eventually left to buy some drinks with her friends. I turned around to where I thought Anna was sitting and started to say something, then stopped myself. I apologized to the stranger and told her I thought she was someone else.

"Who?" she asked. "That crazy girl?"

Discarga played on the floor which was a punk-rock thing to do but when we set up and saw that the stage lights were eight feet away, directly at eye level and hot like a Brasillian country road, we did the same thing. We played terribly and heard scattered requests for some mythical song called "Yellowman" which we denied. Max was the only one on stage and he was cooking under the stage lights. Robert kept slipping and falling on the slick floor and Devon kicked me so hard that he broke two guitar strings. I borrowed Daniel's guitar but it had six strings (one more than I am used to) and I found myself really confused by it. All in all we were less than pleased with our set but we forgot that bar crowds who tend to be pretty drunk and without proper judgment can often times overlook a poor performance and still like you. Tonight was such a night.

Being the guitar player, I am usually approached after a show by lots of bros firing techie questions and I-play-guitar-too's and the like. But tonight I was approached by a very different animal—girls. First was a woman wearing an old metal t-shirt and tight black jeans that zipped up the back. We chatted about this and that while I rolled up my cords and guzzled a couple mini-bottles of water. She left after a few minutes and I thought nothing of it. But on her heels were two more ladies who took her place. Aimless conversation ensued and I started taking inventory of my appearance.

Hair?

A damp, matted mess.

Breath?

Standard post-show, post-mortem tang.

Clothes?

Drenched with sweat and bearing a few of Devon's footprints.

All in all, not my best moment for talking with the ladies.

Regardless, they stuck around for a short while and I eventually stopped caring about what sort of impression I was making. The conversation ran its course and the ladies eventually followed after their friends who were calling to them.

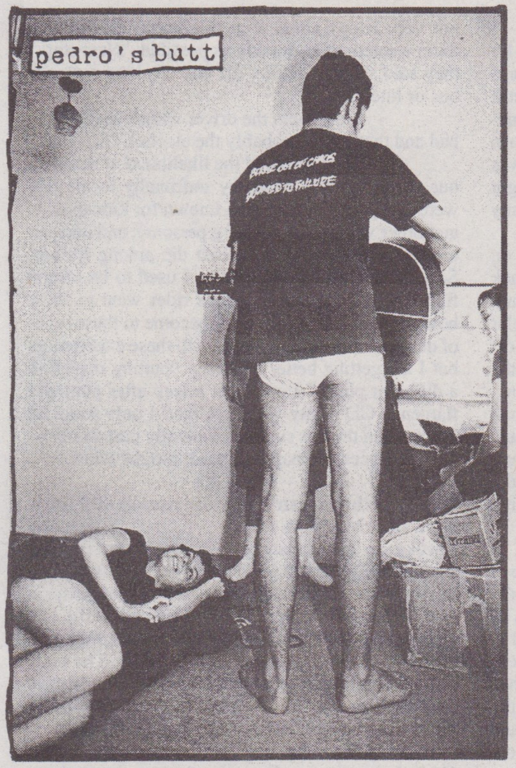
When I was done packing up not sixty seconds later a group of four more girls decked out and ready for some clubbing approached me. I looked around 1) to try and spot someone putting me on with this impossibly interested string of girls, or 2) to see if any of my friends were witnessing this. I found neither.

The group of girls gave me directions to a club downtown along with their collective cell phone number, making me promise I would find them tonight. Then one-by-one they kissed and hugged me goodbye, the last of them planting a soft, extended smooch right on my lips.

On the way to our bus I wondered how I was going to convince everyone that we needed to go to this club. I also wondered if those girls walked away thinking they had just kissed a saltlick.

Before having a chance to ponder either I was stopped by even more femmes. All but one of the three young women spoke English which they excitedly used to invite me to "party" back at their place. Furthermore, they explained that I should not let the non-English speaker down as although she could not communicate it verbally right now she was more than eager to get to know me.

From across the street I could hear Robert yelling for me to hurry so we could drive all night to



Joinville. It was a suiting end to an odd night. I thanked the last batch of new friends for the offer and they understood I had to go. With all the attention I was getting I felt brazen so after the standard hug-and-kiss-on-the-cheek with the three English-speakers, I gave the non-English speaker a salty, scruffy-faced drawn-out kiss on her mouth. Before I walked away she gave me her address, which to me is the tour equivalent of "gettin' digits." Sweet.

Day 10: I am apparently also an idiot.
Nino's new favorite word is Tata and he liked to yell it every time Tata was on the brink of sleep. Of course this meant the rest of us rode the brink of sleep for most of the night also—but hey, what are ya gonna do—yell back?

Yes.

Only, yelling "*sssshhhhhh!!!*" didn't have the same primal effect for us as "Tata" did for Nino.

We pulled into Joinville mid-morning and if I weren't paying attention I would have thought we were in northern Germany. All the architecture was Bavarian, all the signs had German on them and everybody was considerably white (not as white as us, but white nonetheless).

We arrived at an empty house which looked very much like a suburban spread in south Florida: big lawn, flat palatial house, pool and lots of bugs. A teen punker and her mom let us in, explaining that they used to live here but have since moved into a much smaller, less comfortable apartment across town because they had so many break-ins. I guess they figured we'd be good crime prevention.

The place had its drawbacks. It was dusty like a cowboy's boots, nothing but two light fixtures worked and one of the bathrooms sat under a few inches of standing—and therefore lethal—water. But it was not without its charms—namely that we could sleep there for free. We left our stuff and walked around town.

On each tour I whittle out some sort of facial hair design usually involving some sort of mustache (or "mosh-tache'). It is central to every style I end up with. Nothing is punk rock like a mustache. Nothing sets you apart and puts you at odds with people faster than having a mustache. Who are the three biggest demographics for having mustaches? Perverts, cops, and gay men. Making no judgment on any of them, they are still all lifestyles that illicit immediate responses from the general public. So I usually have a mustache of some sort by the second week of any given tour. Today, however, I tried to shave without a mirror and I accidentally sheared it off.

Club 25 de Agosto was run by an ornery church lady who when we arrived yelled at us for being a bad influence on the kids but then went back to her seat and proceeded to sell beer to minors.

Before reaching the venue we heard about a Belgian band that played Joinville. Story goes: band complains about the sound system during their set and is subsequently beaten down by audience and will probably never come back to Joinville (or Brasil for that matter) as long as they live. I got to talking with a few locals throughout the night and they retold the story with the same detached amusement.

While I sat behind the merch a long-hair came up and very enthusiastically told me about his band **Os Legais** (*The Legal Ones*). He described it as "the most hated band in Brasil" and gave me their video complete with a bit of doodie smeared on the liner notes. I thanked him, as he was very sweet and funny, and then he said I could only have the tape if I wore his band's shirt while playing that night. Ten years ago I wouldn't have thought twice about it. But now I'm a little older, a little wiser and a lot more jaded. Once I wore a gift shirt for a band that turned out to be fascists. Another time (in Brasil, actually) our drummer was handed a shirt and was later warned that it would actually get him stabbed by audience members should he wear it on stage.

Now, being in a town proud for having beat-up the last foreign band to come through coupled with this guy telling me his band was the most hated band in Brasil did not make his offer very appealing. On the one hand he was giving me gifts that were dear to him; on the other hand he was looking for promotion—nay, *requiring* it.

He was disappointed when I declined, but understanding. Robert, on the other hand, thought I was just being a dick and put the shirt on. In the end the guy and his band were harmless but around here I felt justified playing my better-safe-than-sorry card.

Nine out of ten people in attendance were under eighteen years old as were the opening bands **Lara** and **Os Carademarte**. The whole event reminded me of parties in high school where everyone was drunk and trying to score while a band played a mixture of the music that was popular that day but with a joking demeanor so as to keep people from thinking they were too serious in case they sounded like crap. The bands were well-rehearsed much better than even any high school band I had been in and the kids approved. It was a refreshing break from the normal hardcore we've been seeing each night.

During the second band the snare drum broke. It appeared that the show was over since all the bands were sharing the same equipment but after ten minutes someone offered to go home and get their gear. Joey from the **Dairy Queens** showed up making him the last member of **DQ** to happen upon a **WHN?** show in some corner of the world other than the San Francisco Bay area. Their band never really got around but the members sure did. We talked for about fifteen minutes and then went outside for some fresh air. There we ran into the guy who went to get his snare drum. He and his friends were apparently too busy drinking in the parking lot to remember about the hall full of drunk, horny kids waiting for bands to play. We were not amused.

A minute later we saw some guy on a Moped speed unknowingly over a speed bump. Then we were amused.

The show eventually got back on track and when it came time to play we decided to put visuals over audio and play with utmost energy. Notes were missed, drums fell over, vocals went unheard but we had a damn good time. I believe "The Book Is on the Table" was our biggest hit of the night but I will venture to say that the majority of the audience, though excited as it was happening, probably won't remember us tomorrow.

I was trying to help the owner of my borrowed amp get his things together. He was amiable and pumped about tonight's show until I unplugged the power adapter from his amp plug (not "broke" but "unplugged"). The guy called me an idiot and walked off with his amp.

A group of six boys crowded around me as I packed up my stuff and asked me all the normal post-show questions: How old are you? What kind of

guitar is that? Where's been your favorite city?; and so on. For being so young they had a good working knowledge of music (favorite bands included **Crimpshrine** and **Operation Ivy**) and an enlightened view towards issues like racism, sexuality, and religion. The conversation eventually moved toward racism and they got really into endorsing their tolerance for different races which is probably a pretty liberal attitude to have in the very white town of Joinville. What they weren't very tolerant of though was the 30-year-old man who kept drunkenly interjecting his preference for German beer and American girls. The more I showed no preference for either beer or girls the more belligerent he got. Eventually the group of six 12-to-14-year-olds pushed him aside and threatened him. He went away and the kids apologized to me for his behavior.

We got back to our squat just in time for da party people to get their noise on much to our chagrin. I set up a bed in one of the quiet rooms and braved the shower with the standing water. When I returned there were five people lying on my bed smoking pot and spilling beer. I was so tired I didn't care.

Before I went to sleep I slipped a few new vocab words into Max's GRE flash cards, none of which are likely to be on his test but all of which I have read in one of Devon's AVN magazines at one time or another.

Day 11: A gas station with a bar? Why didn't I think of that?!

I woke up to Nino jumping loudly into the pool with no clothes on. I went outside to investigate and wound up in the middle of a coconut war. Ever been hit by a coconut? If not, it's probably something you want to work up to. Try starting with something less painful, like a bag of hammers.

I was at the mall people-watching when I got stung by a bee just above my left middle fingernail. I couldn't get the stinger out and my finger began to swell and pulse. I kept bending my finger to ease the pain and eventually the stinger shot out like a porcupine needle.

The bus ride wasn't particularly outstanding (or short). Nino spent most of the voyage using volume to annoy Tata while I spent most of my time flexing my finger back and forth to keep the swelling down. The sting was a lame reminder of life's stupidly uncomfortable and minor inevitabilities (like barfing or headaches or sprained ankles or sunburns) but further, it was a reminder that these unavoidables were not life-threatening either.

Unlike bus rides in Brasil.

Our driver seems to know only one speed: fast. We tend to travel at the same speed on highways, city streets and through parking lots.

And yet we still somehow ended up late to the show. We regrettably missed **Mayombe** who traveled close to 1,000 miles to play the show, and **Duff's** who I was also sad to miss (especially if their namesake was some sort of Simpson's reference). Noticeably absent from the bill was our buddy Tommy del Mar's band, **7 Magnificos**. Tirelessly for weeks, we tried to get them on the bill but for whatever reason it didn't work out. After meeting up with Tommy and his band outside and hearing the story about how none of their (borrowed) equipment or stage mics worked after the last time they played here, or about how they were run out of town and nearly killed by the other bands (none of it their fault, they claim), I started to get a clearer picture about why they weren't on the bill. We still paid to get them each of them into the show because Tommy is one of the greatest people of all time.

Caphofo were playing when we arrived and they sounded very much like the Fat Wreck Chords–style bands we played with here back in 1995: melodic skate-rock. They were well-executed but when **Discarga** came on they blew the previous band away. This sort of night-after-night rocking is making them an increasingly more difficult act to follow.

At some point while we played I got hit on the head. When the stars faded and the real world finally came back into view I realized I was still standing. Moreover, I was still playing. But somehow I was caught in a plastic lawn chair. Instinctively, I looked back towards Devon. He was smiling but I could tell he was wishing he'd thought it through before deciding to throw a chair at my head from across the stage.

I weaseled out of the chair and set it on the edge of the stage by the steps. I turned my back to the chair and when I sensed Devon took the bait, I extended my leg and connected with his solar plexus launching him and the chair backwards off the stage, over the entire flight of steps and into the people watching who in turn fell like bowling pins.

We offered rides to São Paulo for a small fee (to help cover the exorbitant costs of the bus) and wound up with a full vehicle. Two stops were made before our all-night trek back to São Paulo, the first being a grocery store and the second being a gas station.

The grocery store, the super-est of *supermercados*, was unbelievably huge—the size of a square city block. It was so large, in fact, that the workers wore roller skates to get from one area of the store to another. It was 2am when we walked in yet there were whole families shopping not to mention guys picking up on girls (neither of which had carts or baskets leading me to think people actually come here for the sole purpose of being social), and people hanging out in the deli like it was a bookstore coffee shop.

I went straight for the bathroom to "shower" in the sink. From inside one of the stalls I heard a female John Wayne emanating from a walkie-talkie.

"Are you doing OK in there, friend?"

A real person responded from the stall, saying in slow, deliberate English, "I am having a small problem. I may be a short time." This, followed by a poorly stifled flurry of farts.

The walkie-talkie clicked back on and said, "Can I help you, sir?"

"No, thank you. I will be OK." More farts.

I walked out of the bathroom and saw some employees trading off a walkie-talkie, all eager to try some English with the poor employee on the other end.

At the gas station we spotted our driver simultaneously paying for the gas and having a shot of liquor from the bar. Mozine joined him and they had some more shots. It was apparently so tasty that Mozine bought the entire bottle for the driver and his lady-friend. I kind of assumed it was for later but when I saw them chugging it as soon as we got back on the bus I started to get the feeling that our drive was gonna be harrowing, even by Brasillian standards. We weren't sure what to be more shocked at: our host buying our driver booze for the road or a self-service gas station with a full-service bar.

To make matters worse, the fog and/or rain was so thick in some places that we couldn't see three car lengths in front of us. Notwithstanding, we drove around the curves, along the cliff sides and through the puddled roadways with more speed than ever. More than once we actually caught air (or at least weren't using four of the wheels). (*I contend that our 23 passenger bus never once caught air, although I thoroughly endorse story embellishments for readers' enjoyment.—Robert*).

Traffic stopped and up ahead we saw a car tipped upside-down. We stuck our heads out the windows and watched ten people rock it back onto its wheels and off the road. There were no obvious injuries but there was a separate set of tire tracks leading off the road through a newly-made hole in the roadside bushes and into the darkness.

Did I mention that in Brasil nearly half-million people die every year in road accidents?

Mayombe were in our bus with us but not very happy about it at this point; a couple of them wanted off as quickly as possible. "Next stop," they said, "we're getting off and catching a proper bus or hitchhiking."

I told them the driver wasn't usually this bad and that it was probably the alcohol, "So relax."

They weighed the likelihood of death by our vehicle versus death by unfriendly locals (we were in a pretty remote area known for kidnappings and other varieties of missing persons), and decided to stay on the bus and at least die among friends. Seeing them so wound up like I used to be on my first batch of Sudamerican bus rides went to show how jaded and passive I have become to these types of dangers. I'm not really numb to these experiences but I am getting better at Zen-ly "putting myself in a different place." I even fell asleep after putting a flamenco CD in my walkman (and I only woke up twice when the bus swerved violently past an obstacle and forced my haggard head into the window).

Day 12: What doesn't kill you, usually still hurts a lot. (aka Mother's Day)

I woke up about 6am just as we were speeding through the streets of São Paulo. We were still going the same speed only now it had a different perspective because we were hurdling between traffic and pedestrians. We only slowed down when a motorcyclist got run over by a bus in front of us. The body was still twitching as we rolled past. And so began our return to São Paulo, home to an average of 25 murders a day and 10,000 stolen cars a month…

We were dropped off at Pedro **I Shot Cyrus**'s apartment. Enough money was made to pay the bus and driver's fees. We napped till noon and then took turns trying to figure out how to get a call through to our mothers back home. (My mom's one of the biggest supporters of my lifestyle and also the person responsible for my obsession with chocolate and fart jokes, in case you were wondering.)

Tonight's show was a biggie—the Verdu-Rada Hardcore Fest featuring **I Shot Cyrus**, **Mayombe**, **Good Intentions**, **Discarga** and us. The venue was a large hall surrounded by tables dressed in all sorts of vegan goodies from sandwiches to full entrees to sweets to drinks.

ISC shredded. Their singer never once let up from jumping and yelling and smiling and muscle-flexing, and their second guitar player—a big guy with a little guitar—thrashed so hard he ripped the front of his shorts wide open. **Mayombe** obviously still had a lot of pent-up anxiety from the bus ride last night and used it to play intensely and aggressively. **GI** was what you'd think they sounded like—East Coast hardcore with a posi- edge. They were having a great time which got the (huge) crowd to have a great time which got the whole vibe of the place into a fully positive swing. **Discarga** opened with a **Motorhead** medley that had more people watching than dancing, curious to see what was gonna come next. Three minutes later they were ripping through their own songs and the place erupted again. By the time their set ended there was so much energy in the air that I had trouble eating my third one-pound brownie.

For being a last show, we couldn't have asked for more. The energy in the room never let up and though I somehow acquired some serious boo-boos it was one of my favorite **WHN?** shows ever. It helped that we had so many friends there and there was so much good food—everywhere I looked people were having a good time.

After the show Boka and Fralda from **Ratos de Porão** took a group of us across town to a festival they were headlining. We were VIP'ed into the show and backstage as well. In their dressing room were ice chests full of water, sodas and beer, deli trays, desserts and a bunch of rock magazines. I looked at one of them and on the back cover was Boka making an *Arrrrrrggghh!* face with a handful of drumheads. Some guy was taking pictures (probably for that magazine) so I asked Boka to sign the

advertisement for me. He did with a smile as pictures were snapped and poses were made. When I got the magazine back it read: Fuck you, Kreg.

I've *just missed* **RDP** in Brasil, I've *just missed* them in the States, and I've *just missed* them in Europe, so I was really excited when they played tonight. And so were our friends who hadn't seen them in a long time either. They put on an awesome show, but man…what I wouldn't do to see them in a basement. Boka is such a rad drummer and Gordo's such a awkward front man (head shaved bald, over six-feet-tall and close to 400 pounds) that to see them in an intimate environment would be just…heavy.

On the way back to Pedro's apartment we got locked down inside the subway while the police hunted someone down. Our friends recognized some of the cops as skinheads that used to come and fuck up shows not too long ago.

Before retiring to bed I took a shower and inspected my body in the mirror afterwards. My forehead (my friends call it a "fivehead") looks like I was shot with a semi-automatic BB rifle and my chin looks like it has road rash. I blame both of these on Devon's chair from last night. I also have a black eye that I think I got tonight along with some cracked ribs that either happened when I landed on someone or when someone landed on me. Throw in my twisted knee and a finger that won't bend because it's filled with bee-sting pus and it's probably as good a time as any to take a break from playing shows. It's just too bad I will be spending the next couple weeks hiking and mountain biking and doing other things physical.

An acoustic guitar-based sing-along lasted until five in the morning. Being house guests we didn't say anything but Robert assured Mozine that he will have to fall asleep sometime, and when that time comes he'll likely be getting some Bavarian Goggles (or perhaps some other surprise involving Robert's testicles).

Day 13: Touring isn't so much a question of "Where is my next meal coming from?" as much as "Where/when am I gonna be able to take my next dump?"

We gringos woke up when a previously unknown roommate walked about the living room this morning. We apologized for whatever noise we may have made last night and we assured him we had nothing to do with the sing-along. He apologized back and said that he was tired last night but that tonight he promised to start his own sing-along.

A huge gang of us went out to a Krishna restaurant for lunch. It was nice to see so many "average" folks enjoying vegetarian cuisine. With the exception of us there were no punkers nor were there any teenagers or robe-wearing Krishna's or alterna- types eating. The clientele was largely two-in-the-afternoon business persons taking lunch breaks.

Karoline, Devon, and I somehow managed to catch a bus across town and ninety minutes later we met up with Farafa. He sings for **Garage Fuzz** and his wife, Alexandra, works for MTV Brasil. Between them we sat for hours listening to story after story of crazy Brasillian shows (no, really—shows here can be sort of nuts), and rock excess and celebrity faux pas and who is a jerk and who is not and why. These are stories I could not divulge but they were edge-of-my-seat interesting nonetheless. We made it back to Pedro's two hours across town without incident and were greeted with another party. Not necessarily in our honor but a group of people drunk and cavorting howbeit. I spent most of the night talking with Estella **Infect** (or "Pastella") who has an incredible working knowledge of both English and heavy metal. She didn't know Udo Dirkschneider's birthdate, but she did know all there is to know about both **Racer X** and **Rose Tattoo**. We whispered for hours in the quiet room until her ride left at 3am. The rest of the party continued on until 7am.

Day 14: "100% time happy," says Fartito.

Everyone was up by 9am to pack and reminisce. Mozine said this tour was "100% time happy" for him. We agreed.

Devon and Robert went to buy Devon's plane ticket to Bolivia so he could meet us there in a week after he stuck around to interview Coffin Joe and hang out at some **RDP** practices, and after we went mountain biking down the World's Most Dangerous Road. Max is gonna stick around São Paulo for a week and visit as many skate parks as he can.

We went out with some friends for one last hurrah at another pastellaria before Junior drove Karoline, Robert, and I to the airport. Just as my check-in luggage conveyor'ed away I remembered my pocket knife was still in my carry-on guitar case. Rather than risk getting it confiscated or me put in jail for bringing weapons onboard, I gave it to Daniel with instructions to use it solely for cutting/corkscrewing/filing/tooth-picking fascism. He accepted the responsibility and off we went to places unknown…

For more pictures and an account of our trip to Bolivia and Peru (complete with tales of shootings, chokings, coffin hostels, Devon-losing/Devon-finding, threats from Peru's welterweight kickboxing champion, gothic massages, getting stranded and lots of other stuff not particularly punk-rock related) check out: http://www.yourmother.com /whn/sudamerica
Discarga—discarga@hotmail.com
Mozine/MDR/Laja records—www.laja.com.br
Infect—willremain666@hotmail.com
Highlight Records—www.highlightsounds.com
Sick Terror—www.sickterror.cjb.net
Good Intentions—78life@canbrasnet.com.br
Jazzus—umaparte@hotmail.com
Mayombe—lunarecs@hotmail.com
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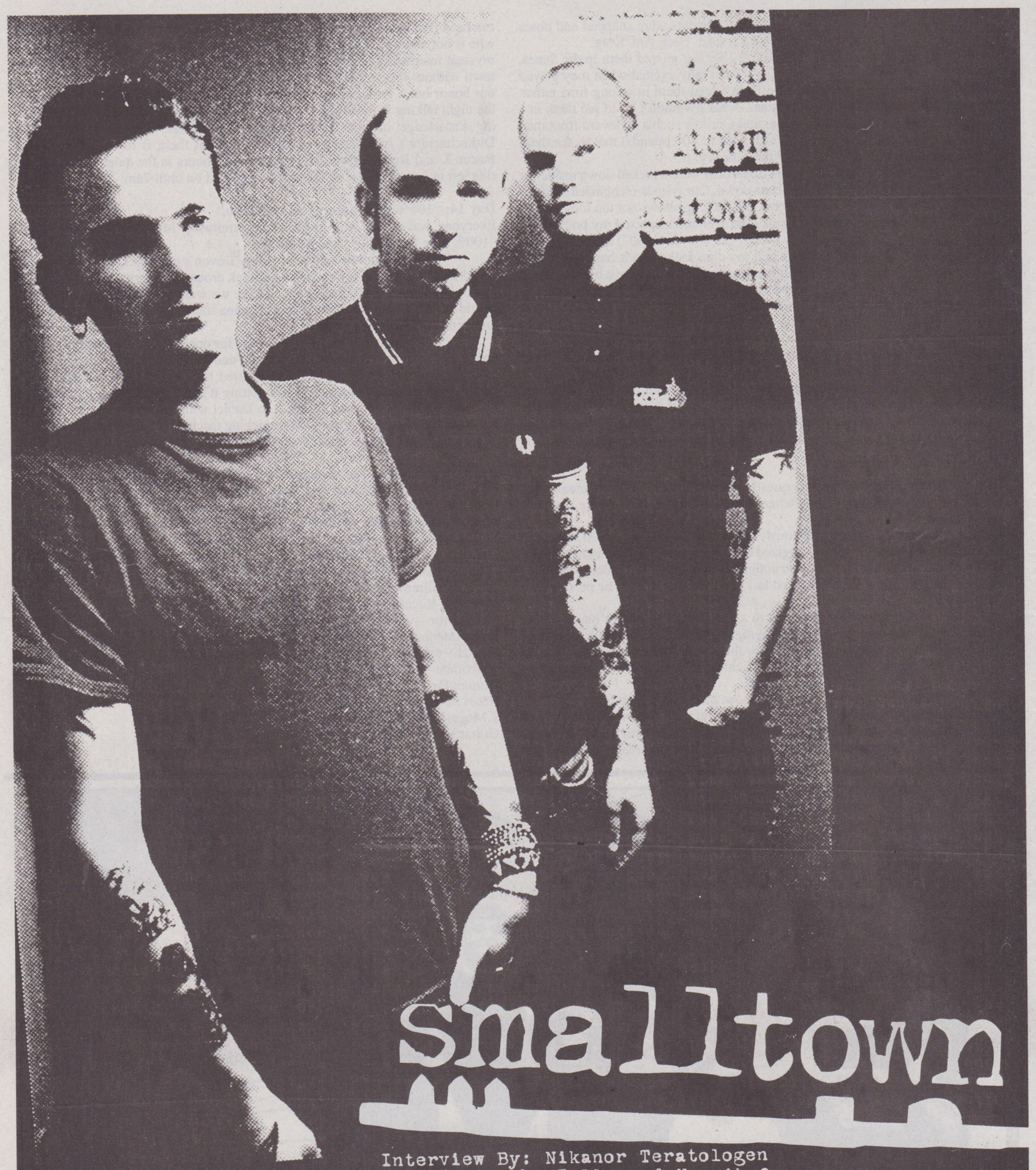


smalltown

Interview By: Nikanor Teratologen
Photos by Palle and Henrik Oscarsson

From Oskarshamn, Sweden, comes the band Smalltown. Most likely you've never visited Oskarshamn, and never will. I have been there though, and it's obvious where the band name comes from. This dinky town is probably like every other hole like this in the world. Nothing to do for people who don't get off on working all day in the factory only to come home to watch bad TV all night before getting up next morning to do exactly the same. The only exception being skating down to the rehearsal studio to crank out some high-quality timeless punkrock.

So far Smalltown has put out two EP's; the self-released "s/t" EP in 2001, and in the beginning of 2002 the EP *Fall Into Line* on Bridge records.

MRR: Can you tell me a brief history of the band; when and why you started out, who was in the band and so on?
Kalle L: Back in the mid-nineties I was in a poppunk band band called Blinker. It was the second band I was ever in, and the first in which I played an instrument. Anyway, we quit early 1998 or so. The summer of 1999 we played a reuniun show, and before that I wrote a few new songs. After that show I felt like getting something going again, so I asked two of my friends who played in various other local bands if they were into starting a new project. They were, and the first songs we played were those "new" Blinker tunes, before we had written new Smalltown originals. The first bassplayer we had, Oslo, quit in 2000 and was replaced with Lobbe who's still kickin' with us. That's how we started out and got here.
MRR: So Kalle L used to be in Blinker. What bands were you guys in before Smalltown?
Lobbe: I played in a poppunk band called Bobbit. We released an EP back in the day. Also I was in The Backpockets who also put out an EP. Today I have a side-project which is a more rockabilly-type band.
Kalle T: I was also in the Backpockets together with Lobbe. Kalle L said Blinker was the second band he was in. I was actually with him in the first one. How old was I, 11? We were tough man. Between 1995 and 1998 or so I was the drummer in Forced into, a hardcore band that gained some reputation in Scandinavia, and released a CD and a few EPs.
MRR: How has Smalltown's sound changed from the start until today?
Kalle T: I think the newer stuff is less poppy than when we started out. Also, all three of us sing more now, more harmonies and stuff.
Kalle L: Yeah, I definitely agree. Those Blinker tunes I mentioned were really poppy. Don't get me wrong, I'm a sucker for melodies, but it soon become obvious that with Smalltown we wanted to have more of an edge. Not that it isn't melodic now, it really is, but it's more energetic and straight-forward I think.
MRR: What quality does each individual have to help Smalltown work out?
Lobbe: Uh... well first off, Kalle T is the most brilliant drummer. He keeps the damn beat better than anyone, and that's important. Get the best singer, guitarist or what have you; without a guy to back it up back there you can only fail miserably. Kalle L I guess is the organizer, sending shit out to people and all that. Also he comes up with like 90 % of the material that make up our songs.
Kalle T: Lobbe definitely is the guy with the looks, ask any chick. Also, he always have good ideas when it comes to arranging the songs.
MRR: What's it like being a band on your level in Sweden?
Kalle T: Well, Sweden is a small place. Which means small cities with few people in them. The math is pretty simple, there's just not a whole lot of kids out there going to the shows with small bands. Of course there are differences, and some places have good things going, but there's a big difference now from back when the hardcore scene was big here in the mid-90s. Back then you could do a little tour in Sweden on a cassette demo, since there were kids with 'zines all over the place, writing about all bands around. I'd say that's alot harder now.
MRR: Tell us about the two records you put out. What labels they are on, and how you feel about them.
Lobbe: The first release was the self titled EP on our own Dull records. We decided to decide to put this one out ourselves just to have something out there, to sell at shows and stuff. It has four songs recorded in one day august 2000 I think. I like it, even though I think we only play one of the songs from it nowadays. Not alot of copies left of this one. The second EP, *Fall Into Line* was recorded April 2001, but wasn't released until February 2002. This one has four songs as well. I think we all like the songs on this one more, but the recording could definitely have been better. This one was released by a small swedish label called Bridge records. They have been around for a few years now, releasing good music like Kalle T's old band Forced Into, Dead End, Outlast, Between Us...
Kalle L: I don't know how easy it would be for people outside Sweden to get hold of these, your best shot is probably to e-mail me at kalledull@home.se and we'll work something out.
MRR: Writing the songs... how does that process usually work?
Kalle L: I usually write the basics of most of the songs. It gets that way I guess since I'm the singer and have to work out the melodies of the vocals and stuff. I don't write completely everything though, every now and then one of the other guys comes along with a riff, I go home and fool around with it and work out the vocals. The songs are rarely totally done when we start rehearsing them. Everyone comes up with ideas about the structure of the songs, and we arrange them together.
MRR: And the lyrics...?
Kalle L: Well, I write those as well. They're almost always about personal stuff. Although I have opinions about stuff like everyone else, political lyrics just isn't my kind to write. They simply don't come out good. Actually I think overly political lyrics often can be really boring, unless they're written with some twist. I sing in English, basically because I think that just sounds better, and almost everyone understands it. Of course it's inevitable that it might show here and there that English is not my first language, but fuck that. I don't care. I'm doing my best.
MRR: What have been the most significant things to happen to you in the history of the band?
Kalle T: Well, when Lobbe joined us so we became the line-up of today. And when we got the first copies of the first EP in our hands. That's always special.
Lobbe: I have to say the tour with The Odd Numbers. It was rad to play that many dates in a row for the first time. You learn alot from that.
MRR: Yeah, the Odd Numbers tour. How did that happen?
Kalle L: That's a long and rad story. Me and Oslo (the original bassplayer) went to SF the summer of 1999 to just hang out and skateboard. This was before Smalltown was going on. Anyway, The Odd Numbers were playing the Bottom of the hill and we went there. I've been a fan of them since like 1991 or so when

they were in that early New Deal movie. I remember recording their tunes directly from the TV. At the show we somehow ended up drinking with the guys, and became friends. When I returned to S.F. in 2000 and once again paid the guys a visit, we threw ideas around about doing a tour together, and the fall of 2001 it happened.

MRR: So are you guys going over to play the US?

Kalle T: We would really like to be able to do that some time. Before that happens though, we need to have a distributed release over there so the kids know who we are. Or travel with a band who's already got some attention, and see it as an opportunity to just introduce our band to new people.

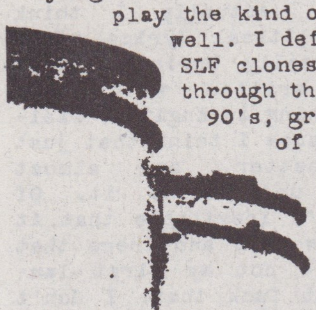
MRR: What would be the most important aspects of the punk movement to you?

Kalle L: Definitely that so much great music have been created that wouldn't have hadn't it been for punk. That's punk to me, to get started playing and writing songs even if you don't really know how to. There are no rules, learn along the way!

Lobbe: That it gets people involved and creative in all sorts of ways. Which by the way applies to "underground" music in general I guess, not just punk. Kids do 'zines, distros, bands, set up shows... that's cool.

MRR: Whenever I read a Smalltown review they always compare you to Stiff Little Fingers, Clash and other Brittish/Irish punk acts from the late 70's...?

Kalle L: I guess that's fair. I mean, we're not trying to reinvent the wheel here. We want to play the kind of music we love, and do it well. I definitely wouldn't say we're SLF clones though, I think it shines through that we were teenagers in the 90's, growing up listening to a lot of american poppunk and stuff, the kind more sprung out of Ramones than anything else. Even if it necessarily doesn't show in our music, nowadays we in the band listen to all sorts of music. Anything from punk to reggae, 60's pop, motown, country, rockabilly...



MRR: Where is the line between stealing and being "influenced?" Is there one?

Kalle T: I think you cross that line when you put other peoples stuff in your songs and try to make it come out as your own. Obvious hints and references are plain fun though. I mean, we put small pieces of punk classics in our songs, mostly because it's cool for people to recognize it here and there. ...Hey, there's the bass from "In The City" ...wasn't that the opening chords of "Wait And See" right there....

MRR: Sweden seems to have launched quite a few bands into success in the rest of the world in the last years. Why is that you think?

Kalle L: One reason could be it's easy to be able to play here. In a lot of cities, there are these organizations supported by tax funds and stuff, I really don't know what to call them in english, that help you out with equipped practice rooms and studio time for more or less a symbolic fee. A lot of bands here take advantage of that, at least when starting out. That's of course great to get young kids without money the opportunity to start playing. Which means alot of new bands, some of them becoming good bands in the end. I know alot of foreign people are stoked when I tell them about this, as they are used to having to pay alot of money just to record a demo, or get a place to practice.

MRR: You've just recorded new material. What are the plans for that, and future plans in general?

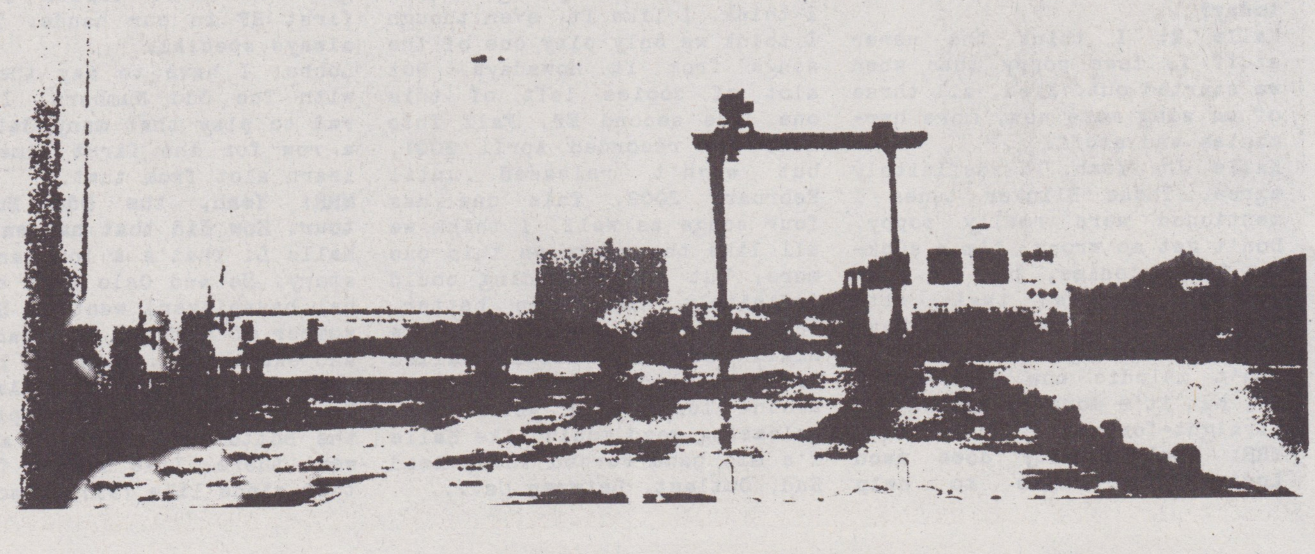
Kalle L: We will release two split EP's in the winter. Probably these songs will end up on them. One of the splits will be with our friends in Bombshell Rocks. It will be released on Bridge records who put out our *Fall Into Line* EP. The other one will be shared with another swedish band, Down and away, and will be released on their own label.

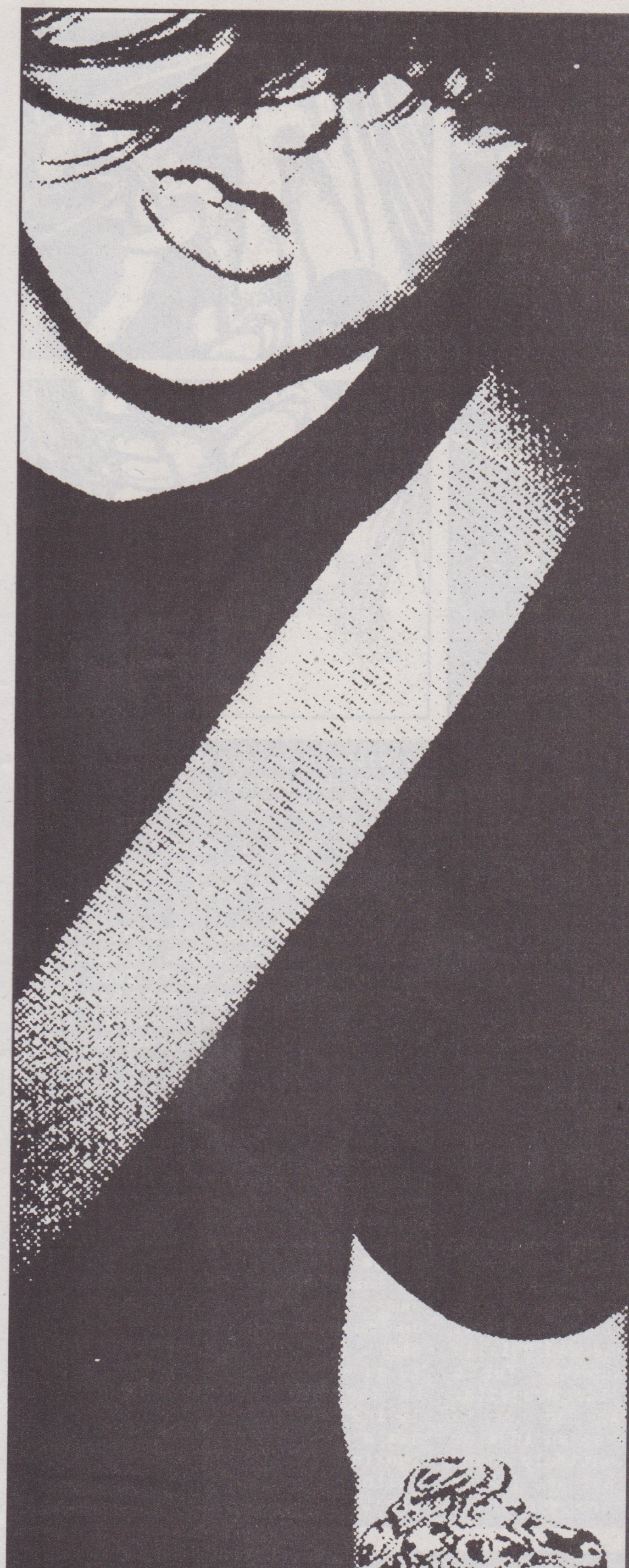
We are still looking for a label to work with on coming releases though, and we will mail the recording out as demo/promotion during the fall. We want to release like a 10"/CD in the beginning of 2003. We'd like to really get it out there, so we can tour more. That's what it's all about, getting out there to play live.

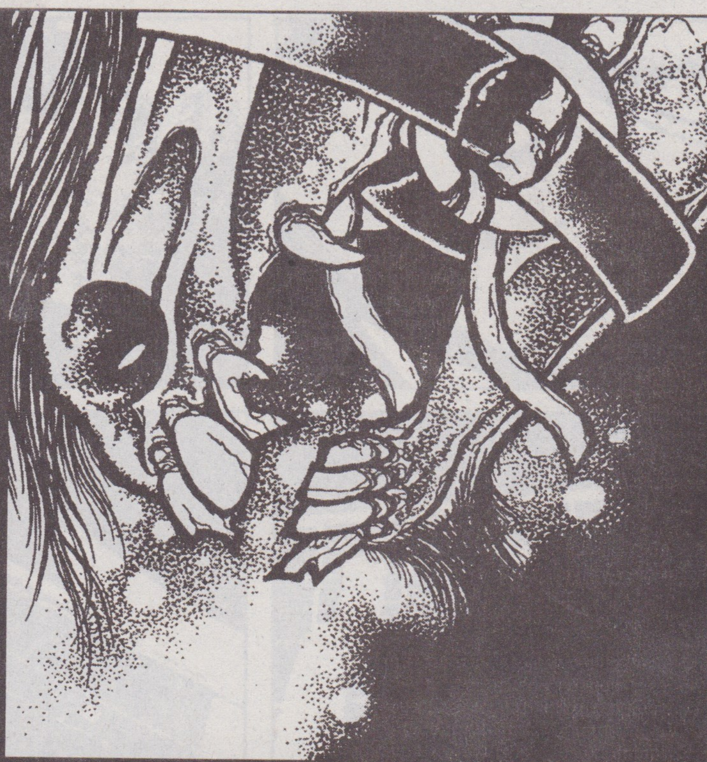
MRR: Last words?

Lobbe: Check out our website at http://come.to/smalltown

It has soundclips and stuff, and the info you need if you want to get in touch. Cheers!

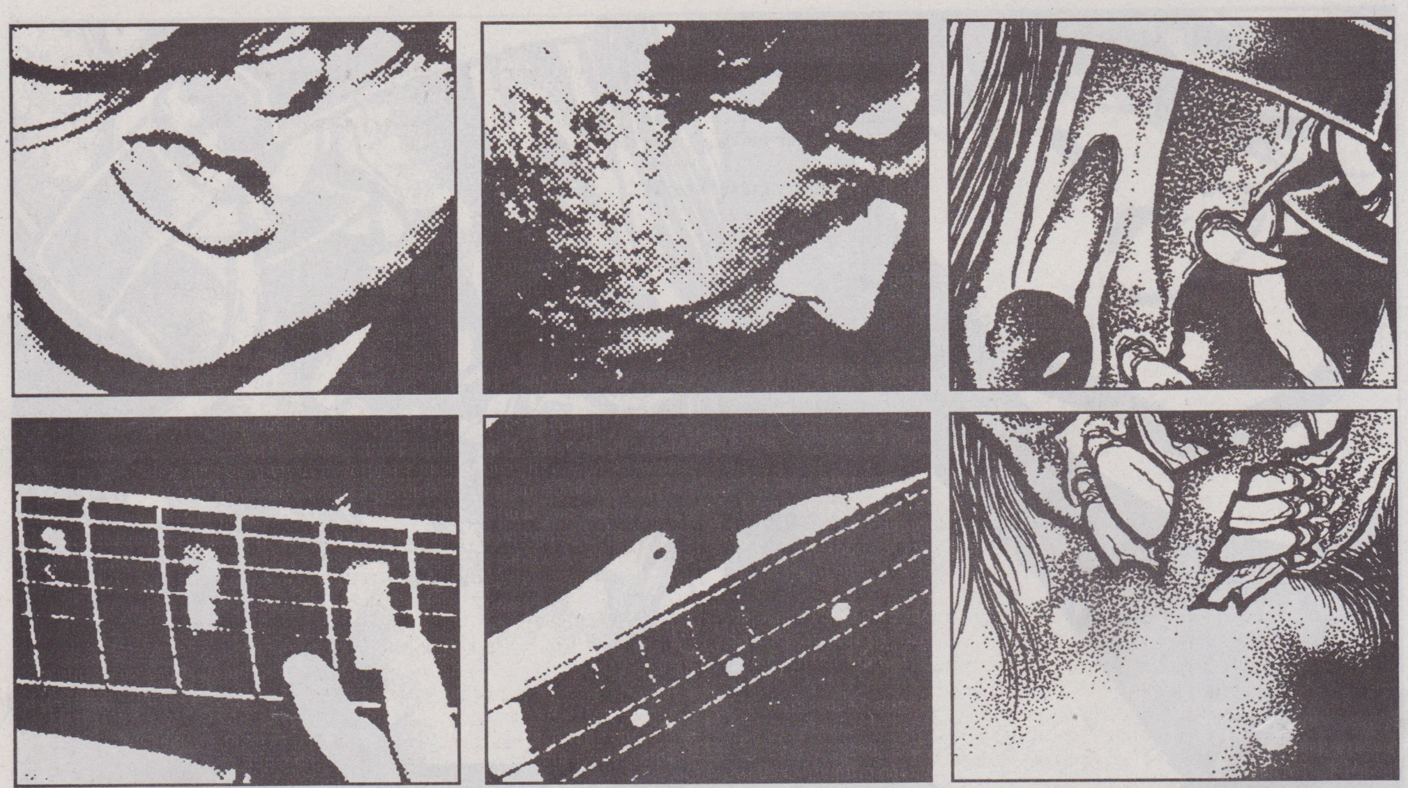






It would be a huge understatement to say that Kylesa hasn't paid their dues. In fact, they make it clear that this is the reason they're even around. After some daunting challenges from the beginning (more than two years ago), Kylesa has unleashed a veritable pummeling of releases this year. If you haven't heard their LP on Prank, you're a poor wretch in a gutter somewhere starving for what I deem the best LP since I can't remember when. This interview was conducted first by email and later completed with all of us together in Savannah. The story of Kylesa is particularly interesting. If you scratch the surface you'll find that Savannah has been an important part of DIY punk for years. Since '86-'87 you could grind coping and listen to bands shred at Sugar Mountain or the Hangnail. These days the Velvet Elvis, 2424, and R.D.'s have become mainstays for all ages shows. It ain't hard to tell, the southeast coast is too strong in 2002! Look for bands like Mastodon, Floor, Cream Abdul Babar, Circle takes Square and Karst to devastate your dome! If you're on tour check out Savannah. Kylesa can't guarantee it'll be a spectacular turnout, but y'all will have a great time and learn what makes Savannah DIY in effect.

KYLESA



MRR: Okay, just to start, Who are you? What do you play? What are your lyrics about?

Laura who wields thine battle axe and screams

Chris is the master blaster on drums

Corey serves as rhythm wizard a la bass and screeches

Phillip casts spells on buzzsaw and heavy pedal whilst shrieking

Laura: "Descend Within" was written in response to Brian's death. So, the words are very personal. It was a shitty time for all of us when he died. "Testing the Good of Man" is a dual perspective on modern medicine and technological advancement.

Phillip: "The Scarab" is about feeling the weight of the world getting you down, but finding a way to build something out of the shit that is thrown at you. "No Remorse" is about looking at your past and the things you have done wrong and realizing there is nothing you can do but learn from your mistakes and move on.

MRR: Where did the name Kylesa come from, first of all? I can't find it in a dictionary, can I?

Christian: The original word is Kilesa. It was something that I just stumbled across. In very simple terms, Kilesa is the general term in Buddhism for defilements of the mind or impurities of thought. The things that one must overcome before one can begin to attain Nirvana. The primary three are hatred, greed, and dilution, but there are eight departments in total.

Phillip: And I suggested we change the spelling to make the name more personalized.

Christian: For the record our pronunciation is Kai-less-uh.

MRR: How did Kylesa start? Where were you, who initiated it? What was the initial idea? i.e. Damad calls it quits, some of the peeps from that band decided to do something else, whilst continuing together, why?

Christian: Damad had a pretty good run. But all good things must come to and end. After a short break, Brian, Phillip, and myself decided to start up another band. Laura had been in a number of local Savannah bands and she and Phillip had been working together for a few years on some side projects. So it seemed natural for her to give it a go. As far as an idea or concept, I'm not entirely sure that there was one, per se. I know for myself, that there were some directions in my drumming that I wanted to pursue, that I don't think would have been appropriate in Damad.

Phillip: Yeah, I don't think there really was a concept except just play and write what felt natural at the time.

MRR: The foreign element-Corey, you moved to Savannah form Ohio? You were in Cobra Kai?? Tell me a little about that and how you ended up in Chatham County? It's an interesting coincidence that you happened along and things clicked.

Corey: Well, I don't know how interesting the story is, but here goes . Cobra Kai was a lot of fun for me. We traveled a lot basically doing shit I couldn't alone. So after we disbanded I became very bored with Cincinnati. After a few months of boredom I wanted to leave really badly. Around the same time a neighbor was planning on moving to Savannah. So the night before she moved I decided to go with. Savannah turned out to be the best thing for me. After living there for a few months I saw a flyer at my work for a band looking for a new bassist. I called about a week later and practiced with Chris, Laura, and

Phillip. Things pretty much clicked after that.
MRR: Could you please talk about Brian? What recordings is he on? What did he have to do with Kylesa getting together?
Christian: There are not enough words or pages to print them on to adequately describe Brian Duke. He was truly one of the best friends I have ever had. A day does not go by that I don't think about him. As far as his influence with Kylesa is concerned, he was there from the start. We had set out to record a demo and had laid down the initial music tracks and a few tracks that were nothing more than scratch vocals, ideas that everyone had at the time. On June 2, 2001 Kylesa played our first show in Savannah. On June 6, 2001 Brian was found in his bed. If I may say this, there has been a lot of shit talked about how he passed away. I understand the way things get passed along and distorted, but some really fucked up stuff has gotten back to us, and in a way, it is pretty sad how far some people took the whole thing. I am pretty sure that those people know who they are, but because I don't, all I can do is tell it straight up. Brian passed away from complications due to an epileptic seizure. He was epileptic, but it was not a daily concern. There was absolutely nothing anyone could have done to save him. He was unlike anyone and I miss him.
Phillip: Brian's death was incredibly hard to deal with. I had always felt a huge connection to him. I miss him in a way I can't describe with words, just feelings that we put into music.
MRR: Pushead art. How do you get Pushead art on your record? Is it a hassle? He's been an influential artist for many. What does his art mean to you to be on your record?
Laura: I was very excited to hear that Pushead liked our music and was interested in doing some artwork for us. Needless to say, I have been a huge fan since I was a kid. So ever since I saw the first .jpeg I have been grinning from ear to ear.
Phillip: I think it is safe to say everyone in Kylesa has been a huge fan of Pushead's work since we were kids. He's one of the reasons I am even playing the kind of music I do. His writings in old Thrasher magazines were one of the only ways a small town kid like myself could be turned on to cool underground music. It is an honor to have his art grace our music. He also took on a role more than just providing us with his artwork. He offered suggestions on several issues regarding the album, such as title and track listing, which we of course listened to. We are extremely fortunate to be in company w[illegible] some of the amazing bands he has worked with in the past.
MRR: How did the split with Memento Mori happen? Do y'all know each other by way of the Ohio-Savannah link? Mention other projects that you have planned in the future, i.e. the split with Cream?
Corey: The Memento Mori split came about, I guess, since Ryan (bassist in Memento Mori) and I talk a lot over the phone. We both were in Cobra Kai and he also moved out of Cincinnati. I was really into this band and showed everyone else in Kylesa their tape. The same for them, so it came about like that, two bands liking each other's music.
Laura: We are doing a split CD with Florida's Cream Abdul Babar. We did a lot of experimenting with this material and it kinda flows into one long song. We're currently working on new songs for our next full length.
MRR: You guys obviously don't play blast beats. There seems to be an overabundance of speed right now. (And to relate this to *MRR*) you see plenty of "fast, speed, skate, thrash, hardcore" as you look thru *MRR*, in the columns, ads, reviews, etc. It seems fast, fast, fast" output is bigger than ever. Is this watering down the spectrum of d.i.y. punk? Kylesa is on a different path (a refreshing one at that). What's your take on this?
Laura: I'm actually really stoked that thrash and hardcore are big right now because I love the hell out of it and it is so fun live. There are a lot of bands doing it right now, but the ones that stand out are really good. And if there has to be an abundance of bands playing a similar style, what a better style than thrash? This of course can (and will?) eventually crash with only the best and truest continuing in that vein. I think it is probably in our benefit to play in the style that we do so we don't get lost in the crowd. We can play with thrash bands, but definitely stand out, which leads to an interesting and diverse fan base. Bottom line is we do what we do regardless of what is popular. One of the most important things about a band (to me anyways) is showing conviction through your music whether it is thrash, '77 punk, metal, hardcore-whatever. A band might be technically proficient or have catchy hooks, but if 100% of the raw emotion isn't there, then that band will have little impact on me. Take a band like Tragedy. Those guys mean every fucking word and note they strike. It just comes across in their music. And the new Amdi Petersen's Arme 7" is probably the best punk record I've heard in years.
Phillip: I don't think we really worry about whether or not we fit in with what is popular. I agree with Laura. My favorite bands are the ones you can tell have total conviction in what they do. I think it's important to put 100% of your heart and soul into your music, regardless of the fact that you may not fit in with the rest of the crowd.
MRR: While y'all are at it, it'd be awesome if you could recommend some beats that are worth checking out. Not necessarily influences (although welcome), but talk about peeps who perpetrate the not so fast, more drop-tuned distort lines and rhymes.
Laura: It's hard to say who is doing what we are at the moment, but there are bands that are in the same vein, for sure. I guess the main difference between us and some of the other heavy, drop-tuned bands is that we never go into blast beats or really fast punk parts. I think Face Down In Shit is doing a similar thing (they understand the Southern groove that southern bands tend to share) and Cream Abdul Babar as well. But I think, in general, there are more bands in California and Europe that share our style rather than here on the east coast.
Phillip: I like so many different styles right now. There seems to be a lot of great bands going strong. Some recent bands I've seen that I've liked are PG. 99, Artimus Pyle, Vitamin X, Municipal Waste, Amdi Petersens Arme, Against Me!, local Savannah d.i.y. bands such as; Unpersons, Circle Takes Square, Roswell, The Bricks, Karst, etc. I could go on and on with this answer, so I'll stop.
MRR: I'd like you to give a perspective of Savannah. I never have anything but the most amazing time when I'm in town. Everyone is so damn friendly.
Phillip: I have really enjoyed being in Savannah lately. It is a small scene, but a tight one with a lot of great, friendly support. Our friend Jeremy Clark (of Subvert Savannah and whose art graces the headers of Slug and Lettuce) has been keeping the D.I.Y. scene alive with a venue called R.D.'s and it looks as if this fall there will be some great shows. We encourage people to come and visit. We are a friendly bunch. Ya know, Southern hospitality and all.
You can contact Kylesa at Kylesa13@hotmail.com. You could and should contact Jeremy Clark for info on his distro and custom artwork and screen printing at Subvert Savannah, P.O. Box 1063, Savannah, GA 31402 or RUNLIKEHELL2000@YAHOO.COM

CRASH AND BURN

By Sleazegrinder

Trash in, Trash out

What a difference a year makes. Last time I sat down with Crash and Burn kingpin Bill Brown to discuss his band and the punk killing brand of high octane rock and roll they peddle, he was bearded, surly, entirely mistrustful of the local press, and drinking like his ship was sailing for the desert in the morning. Come to think of it, besides shaving his beard off, nothing much has changed. Crash and Burn continue their sinister, slithering ascent from the basements and VFW's of five dollar, all night, all ages punk shows, from the crust and stink of the loud, fast, no rules lifestyle of the terminally hardcore—"There was a lot of shitting in plastic bags back then," as Bill once told me—to the top shelf beast of a band that they've become.

Front man Bill and drummer Brendan Jones were both founding members of ill-starred and scarred gutter punk bruisers Shoot the Hostages, and that acid-tongued, fists-first sense of punk rock chaos in the finest Dwarves n' GG Allin scumfuck tradition remains intact, even as their sound muscles up and refines itself into a sort of strutting, punk-metal crotch rawk with one eye on the arena and the other on the back door. Featuring the corrosive, sinewy lead axe-handling of Mr. Phil Valentine, he of the shameless bandana and the thousand-yard stare, who sounds like he's playing 17 guitars at once, and they're all pissed off at one another; and a bass player, Jeff Artiaco, who does not look like trouble, but most certainly is, Crash and Burn are the oft-promised filth and fury personified, as much Zeke as they are Guns and Roses, as much hardcore as they are hard to handle. Their first, self-titled album on Rodent Popsicle (which will forever be known as "Kill a Punk for Rock and Roll," just because people love saying that) was suitably punk as fuck, but possessed enough evil swagger to win over plenty of long haired rockers—myself included—as well. And so began Crash and Burn's grand adventure, straddling the wildly divergent worlds of crack pipes and leather pants, of Rancid Hell Spawn and Gluecifer, and doing it with the kind of style usually reserved for escaped convicts with anger management problems. The tail end of 2002 finds them with a second album under their belts, a real rock city destroyer called "Sick Again" on recently formed Boston label Traktor 7. What do you think happens next? That's right, brothers and sisters, they're coming to burn down a club near you. But first, we drink, or at least they do, and tell some terrible true tales.

This is not an interview

Interviews, even when they're being conducted with cock rocking danger punks like our antiheroes here, are conducted in quiet spaces with one or two band members that are entirely focused on the business at hand. Which was my original intention, it really was. After all, our meeting place in question used to be that kind of space. Sure, it had waitresses with big tits that were stuffed into tight red t-shirts, and the beer was criminally cheap, especially for a section of town that houses about 3 million 18-year-olds, but at least it was quiet. Somewhere between here and there, though, Charlie the Double Cheeseburger King turned into Charlie's, the happening punk rock bar. As such, I found myself sitting with all four band members and two record label honchos, with a whole row of young, at least sideways mobile, almost-punks belly up to the bar and watching cartoons, and a jukebox blasting Rock City Crimewave, Me First and the Gimmie Gimmies, and Social Distortion. Oh yeah, and the glasses of beer were at least three times bigger than they used to be, and now they were Belgian. So no, this is not an interview. This is what you'd call "Holding Court." This is what you'd call a renegade sect of the Boston Rock City Mafia's muscle clinking their skull rings together in celebration of friendship and powerchords. The resultant tape from an *actual* interview would contain questions, followed by answers, in an easily transcribed flow of understandable words and phrases. What I've got goes something like "ZZZCrackle...fuck, dude...blargghhhshit, fuck yes! Ha ha ha... hisss...." for an hour or so. Still, I'm hardly one to fail a mission. This then, is a series of textual snapshots, rock and roll as it happened on one particularly good night in the middle of summer, in the middle of the city. If you want rock band minutia dragged out until you're numb, well, that's what *Punk Planet* is for.

Sick Again

So maybe I should just tell you what Crash and Burn really want you to know first, which is that *Sick Again* is an absolute motherfucker of an album, filled with drums that sound like rolling thunder, guitars like a stab in the back, and Bill's trademark tales from the gutter, spat out in a furious spittle, part Satanic metal rasp, part Lemmy bellow, all punk-fueled fighting words. There's also an unmistakable groove riding fast and smooth underneath the surface. It's no wonder there's burned-out strippers on the cover, because you could bump and grind along nicely to this record, with the proper narcotics. As for the title, Bill tells me that it's simply, "A continuation of the theme, you know. We're still fuckin' sick." Musically it's not far removed form the scorched earth theory of their first record—it's tough, menacing, and absolutely Down To Kill—but it's bigger, better, more complex, and doesn't run at triple speed all the time. There might even be a melody or two in there. "Well, we listen to a lot of classic rock. Inspiration-wise, that's more of where I'm coming from, and then it gets put through the punk rock blender by the time we're through with it," Bill explains. "It definitely makes it more fun, and more interesting to play, if you actually take the time developing songs instead of just rushing through verse-chorus-verse-chorus." Does this mean Crash and Burn are destined to become a classic rock band? "Uh..." Bill's not sure how to answer, but Brandon is.

"Dude, we're classic now," he says. And he's right. "Sick Again" is one of the first releases on Traktor 7, a new label formed by Mario Travers and Milligram's own power-crooner Jonah Jenkins, and wholly dedicated to The Rock. "We wanted to put out music that we liked, not necessarily what was commercially viable," Jonah tells me of the label's intentions. "Not that I don't want Crash and Burn to sell records, I mean, I hope they sell a lot. It's just not the primary reason for releasing the record." Bill agrees. "Listen, every time we sell a fucking record, somebody's making money off of it, and it certainly isn't us. There's nothing wrong with making money, if you're fair about it." Traktor 7, then, is more of an equal partnership then most band-label agreements. "Oh, yeah," Jonah says. "The agreement that we have with these guys is, 'Lets assess how this record came to this label, and let's just make sure that you guys feel like what's happening is equitable. If we're going to approach it this way, then you guys help us out that way, and vice versa.' If these guys need to come to the office to help us put packages together, that's worth something, that's..." "That's cheap labor," Bill quips. With plans for Digi-paks, singles, and all manner of wondrous things, Traktor 7 looks to be a potent new force in Boston rock. And so does Crash and Burn. Despite their surly demeanor, the band does have a begrudging affection for their hometown. That's one of the other things they wanted you to know. "Boston kinda kicks ass as far as bands go," Bill admits. "We've got Rock City Crimewave, Cracktorch, Milligram, Kings of Nuthin'... and there's some great punk bands, too . The Unseen are really fuckin' good. We like being in Boston, but once this record's out, we're going to around a lot less often. I like having it as a homebase, though. I don't want to be one of these bands that moves to LA. If we ever get to the point were we should be moving to LA, well, we can just do the same shit here. Most of the bands that move out to LA just sit around waiting for the record label to do something for them. The bands that are legit," he tells me, "Wherever they're living is just their homebase anyway." And with that, more drinks are ordered, the jukebox gets louder, and everybody starts talking at once.

Rock Breaks Out at the Fist Fight Show

"It's been...*different*," Bill says diplomatically when I ask him what the past year infiltrating the local rock scene has been like. "Some of the folks in the rock scene have been kinda wary of us. There not used to having so much...activity happening. A lot of the rock scene is based more on posturing, then on the possibility of some action going on." Jeff shrugs. "We're ex-punks," he offers. "Yeah, we're recovering punk rockers," Bill agrees, "regardless of how much you try to get it out of us." A few months back, I was standing in some local dive bar when a glassy eyed Bill stumbled over to hassle me about pissing all over that last Zeke record in the local paper. Which I only did out of spite, by the way. Anyway, we were talking rock when I asked him, "So, when are you getting some leather pants, anyway?" You see, as much as they're loathe to admit it, Crash and Burn get more rock and roll with every show. Bill even turns his back to the audience at one point, and points up to the sky with his red right hand, as if God himself is going to bless the next solo. But C&B, they assure me, are not rock stars, they are merely punks that rock. "Never," Bill spat, answering my leather pants question. "We're not the kind of band that does a lot of posing. I need to fucking move around on stage. I need to be mobile, because you never fucking know what's going to happen up there." That sense of urgency, of potential chaos, is a big part of Crash and Burn's appeal. Sometimes they don't even have to be involved for the mayhem to ensue. Case in point, a recent night of Boston-bred Super Rock.

C&B blazed through their set with typical wild abandon, all scorch and rancor, with Bill's black cat moan and Phil's razor riffs so inflaming the punters in the front row that when glitter metal headliners Quitter hit the stage and attempted laying on their signature super soul power, they were greeted by a couple of loudmouth hecklers that wanted less arena glam and more sweaty motorpunk. Next thing you know, mic stands and guitars are swinging wildly. The action poured off the stage and into, and then outside of, the club. A total melee, in other words. And Crash and Burn got blamed for the whole sorry spectacle. It may have been the greatest rock show I've ever seen. "Oh yeah, the fight. That was hysterical," Bill laughs. "Well, the statement has to made that these weren't friends of ours or anything, they were just random guys," he tells me. "If anything, the only reason that guys like that, meathead-type guys have even heard of us, is because we're in the rock scene now. Now that we're doing these kinds of shows sometimes, as opposed to underground, all ages punk shows, more people like that know who we are. The rock scene did it to themselves, if you ask me. Anyway, I certainly don't want anybody to fuck with the bands, but you also ought to be able to take a few hits, you know?"

Crack Rock

No place better to take a few hits then on the road. "Oh man, we've been touring like crazy," Bill says, when I ask him where Crash and Burn have been lately. "We went down south, we did multiple East Coast tours, and we did a full West Coast tour. We played with some great fuckin' bands, too. Zeke, the Pattern, Valentine Killers, we played with..." Phil cuts in. "Undisputed Heavyweights," he says simply. "Oh yeah, those guys are a fuckin' real good band," Bill adds. I ask them if these last runs were anymore high-brow than previous tours. A hotel room to trash here and there, maybe. Phil snorts at the assertion. "I think we only stayed in one hotel room the whole tour," he says. Bill explains. "Like if we break down because it's four in the morning and we're gonna die unless we pull off the road and get some rest, maybe then," he tells me. "Mostly we stay at people's houses, on people's floors. Generally in the worst part of any city we got to. We even stayed in a crack house last time," he laughs. "Sometimes we end up staying at a rest area, or like in a parking lot," Phil says.

"We don't make enough money to stop anywhere," Bill continues. "We barely make enough money to get gas to get to the next show." This, in rock and roll terms, is what you'd call doing it the hard way. "It's worth it, though," Brandon says. "And you always come back with a good story to tell, like, 'I slept in cat piss last night!' or something." This might be a good time to mention that Crash and Burn have a new member. Last time I checked, there was a guy fittingly named 'Bongo' on drums. "Oh yeah, we got a new drummer," Bill finally informs me. "Me and Brandon were both in Shoot the Hostages. He was living in Oakland for the past few years, and it just so happened that when our old drummer Bongo wanted to move to Portland, Oregon, Brendan moved back here. So it worked out perfectly." After a little prodding, I find out that Brandon and Bill have an even longer musical history together. "We used to play in this band called Wife Beater together, but Brandon was still in high school," Bill tells me. "We would tell him that he couldn't come to practice unless he brought over some teenage girls. And he would! It was not one of our prouder moments," Bill laughs. Speaking of proud moments—did he say a *crack house*? "Oh yeah" Bill says, "They were selling crack right outside the door, everybody in the place was a crack fiend. It all depends on what part of the country you're in. Seattle's got all the speed freaks, the south's got all the crack addicts...where else?" "New Orleans," Phil spits. "Oh yeah," Bill chuckles. "New Orleans..." Phil's got a snarl going now. "New Orleans was fucking gross," he says. "And there was this big show going on two doors away from us." "It was just a bad night to play," Bill explains. "It was Phil Anselmo's cousin's band, and everyone was there..." Wait a minute, his *cousin's* band? "Yeah," Bill shrugs. "That dude is like fuckin' rock royalty over there. So we kind of got screwed on our show." Still, a night on the town in New Orleans couldn't have been all that bad. "Oh, it was one of the best nights ever. We were up until the sun came out. But it was another one of those scenes where we're up in the morning, and we're at somebody's house, and there's bums passed out on the couches, and dudes booting up in each room, and we're kind of sitting there going, "Yeah, here we are, and we gotta go drive 14 hours soon." Don't weep for Crash and Burn, however. There are still plenty of spoils in this rock and roll war. "There's certain places where we have a certain reputation," Bill says cryptically, "So they make sure they party with us. They've got all the party favors ready, and they're all set to go when we get there." No wonder they're always on the road. "A lot of bands in the rock scene around here don't like to travel. I guess because it's costly, and you have to be able to drop your job, get the time off, break up with your girlfriend for that time, or whatever. I think it kind of sets bands apart." "It's what it's all about, though," Brandon adds. "I wouldn't have it any other way." Jeff agrees. "It's more fun this way. Bands around here want to stay in hotels every night." Bill drains his beer. "The sad fact of the matter is that rarely fuckin' happens," he says. "More likely you're gonna end up at a fuckin' crack house."

Sick Again, Crash and Burn's rip snorting new record, is now available on **Traktor 7** records. They also have a track on the upcoming Dead Boys tribute on **Reptilian** Records. The band is on a full US tour as we speak, check their website for tour dates. And don't forget the party favors, whatever the fuck they are.

Crash and Burn: www.crashandburn1.com
Traktor 7 Records : http://traktor7.com/
Reptilian Records: www.reptilianrecords.com

Anti-Flag
"Mobilize"

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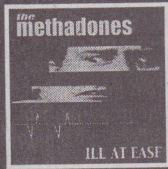

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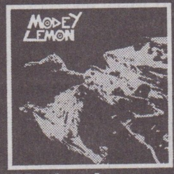

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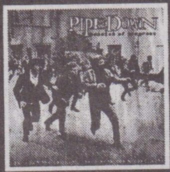

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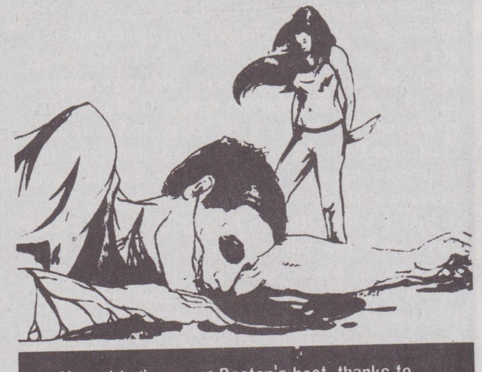

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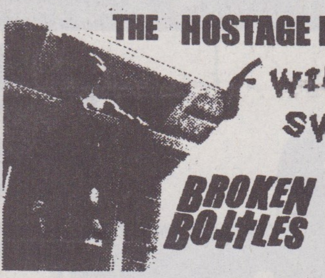

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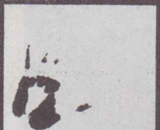

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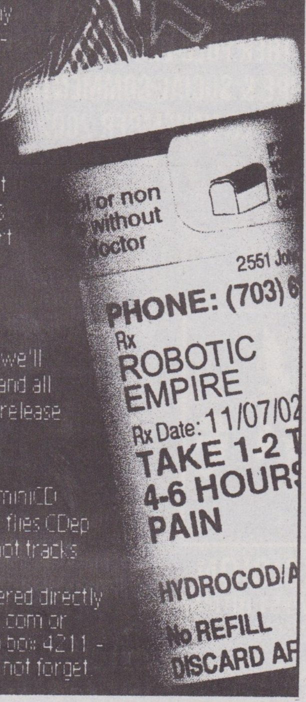

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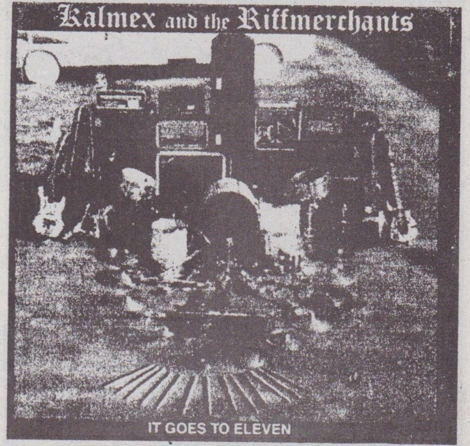

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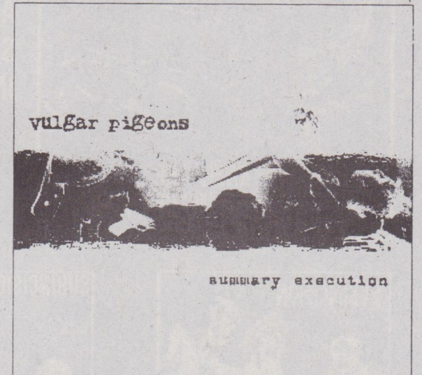

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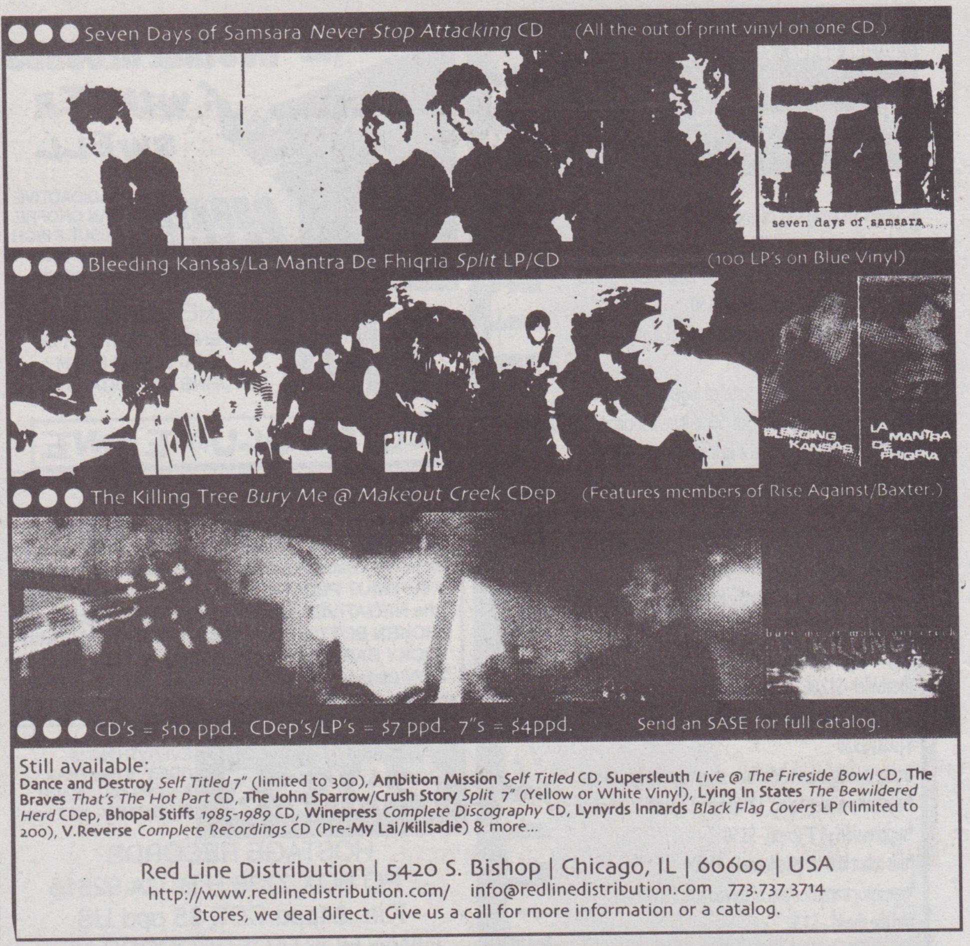
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BOOKS

Glue and Ink Rebellion • Sean Carswell
127 pages• $12.00
Gorsky Press
PO Box 320504 • Cocoa Beach, FL • 32932

Glue and Ink Rebellion is a collection of stories by Sean Carswell, who has most recently been a contributing editor and writer at *Razorcake* magazine, a publication which rose from the ashes of Southern California's legendary *Flipside* zine. Sean Carswell's writing has always stood out to me as being superior when compared to most of the literary contributions one finds in the bigger underground music magazines. If you could build a pyramid model of every columnist that has contributed to *Maximumrocknroll, Flipside, Hitlist, Clamor, Punk Planet,* and even *Razorcake*, you would find Sean Carswell at or near the top of that pyramid, right below the great Mykel Board. That may or may not mean anything to you, but if you get the gist of what I'm attempting to explain, then you would be well advised to pick up a copy of *Glue and Ink Rebellion*, because it is an almost flawless collection of pure literary entertainment on the most down-to-earth, real level you could ever hope to find in the world of underground press.

The author adds a little twist to his collection by stating in the intro that the stories presented in *Glue and Ink Rebellion* are both works of fiction and non-fiction. When you read selections from the book, it does ring true at time. There are also moments that could only be literary embellishment, but it does seem clear that Sean has led the kind of life that allows him to inform his fiction (if and when it is that) with enough reality to convince the reader that what they are reading is totally possible. Once again, this brings to mind Mykel Board, who once wrote an entire column on the art of doing what I just described (I think he called it lying).

This collection of stories is not only punk in the sense that Sean Carswell writes about punk and the lifestyles of punk rockers, but also because it's about the realities of surviving on a day-to-day basis in this world as an outsider. It's about being an aspiring writer who makes his living in a blue collar world. It's about holding on to one's individuality through music, humor, and even recreational drug use, but it's just as much about holding *Glue and Ink Rebellion* in your hands, knowing that it's good and appealing enough to be published by a big publishing house, yet it's a DIY publication.

Glue and Ink Rebellion is on the level of *Cometbus* at his best (although not quite as accomplished as say, *Double Duce*, which is the Citizen Kane of personal zines). The stories of teenage construction workers who attempt to approach girls they have crushes on after a day spent digging septic ditches are effective in communicating many of the ideas, experiences, and ideals discussed, but not fully realized, in so many zines, including more recent issues of *Cometbus*. These are not necessarily direct representations of experiences we've all had, but they are experiences most of us can relate to, because we may have known somebody who has lived them, or we may have lived through something so similar that it's like we have been in at least one of Sean Carswell's characters' shoes before.
—Jay Unidos

The No-Nonsense Guide to Democracy
The No-Nonsense Guide to Class, Caste, and Hierarchies
Richard Swift and Jeremy Seabrook
144 pages
New Internationalist / Verso • 180 Varick Street
New York, NY • 10014-4606

The No-Nonsense series continues with guides to "Democracy" and "Class, Caste, and Hierarchies." These guides follow volumes addressing globalization, fair trade, international migration and the ambitious "world history," in more ways than one.

The No-Nonsense Guide to Democracy is a concise overview of the institutional and economic structures we find at the intersection of liberal democracy and corporate capitalism, and details the failures of democratic practices because of the market ideologies that dominate the outcome of these practices. Author Richard Swift examines the differences between "strong" and "weak" democracies, outlines the different variations on the democratic process (e.g., direct representation versus proportional representation), and investigates the impact of globalization on the disciplining of democracy to the whims of wealth, as well as the groundswell of protest movements in response. Like the other No-Nonsense guides, this one provides a wonderful, useful introduction to the power structures produced and reproduced by political and economic elites and their implications for access (or its lack) to these structures by the so-called "people." And like the other guides, *Democracy* is written in clear, straightforward prose and evinces an enthusiasm for pursuing viable political alternatives to these dire situations. This is arguably the guides' most valuable and convincing aspect—they propose potential avenues for social change, and give us examples of local struggles with a node toward their implications on an international scale.

My caveat (or the "But...") is the same as it has been for the other guides I've reviewed—these are focused almost exclusively on questions of class, economic inequalities, and the structural constellations of globalization. *The No-Nonsense Guide to Class, Caste, and Hierarchies*, for instance, defines hierarchies by class (and in one chapter, the caste system of social inheritance

in India). This guide offers a thorough overview of the various revolutions in modes of production and the kinds of classes these modes produced; a short history of labor movements (from the Chartists to the IWW); and the enduring injuries of class inequities (for instance, the violence of the "meritocracy" argument and the American Dream) in an era of globalization. But if the hierarchies discussed are understood as class hierarchies, which are already indicated in the title, why bother with the third term at all? So many of their examples of social protest are drawn from the so-called Third World, yet none of these guides (of the ones I've read) offers much analysis of colonialism or neocolonialism and their aftermaths, let alone their interpenetration with jagged formations of racism and patriarchal collaborations. These other, scattered hegemonies are rarely addressed, to the detriment of these guides as, well, "guides."

Additionally, these guides are short on the critical social and philosophical theory. Is it really enough to suggest that the "people" are distracted from democratic participation by the supposedly false needs manufactured by commodity culture? (This is the intellectual inheritance of Adorno and Marcuse.) Or that the democratic impulse—"people's unquenchable notion that in a democracy they should get it decide"—can actually be characterized as an "unquenchable" desire? What else might we say about the non-structural components of liberal democracy and its failures—for instance, the national sentimentality we've seen blossom in the year after 9/11 that has become an informal social force determining proper and improper expressions of citizenship? How do we explain the refusal of the right to privacy to criminalized people of color, pregnant women and queer individuals in the United States, or the overwhelming passage of anti-immigration laws by the "people" in voter initiatives in California? Is it enough (as Swift suggests in a passage arguing that the "people" are no more or less reactionary than the political elite) that these draconian measures are balanced out by the legalization of medical marijuana by some of those same populations? The definition of the notion of "possessive individualism" which appears in both guides is limited to a theory of liberal democracy that favors propertied persons, but there is much more to the formal and informal exclusions of liberal democracy (see above: colonialism, racism, etc.) that is not addressed in this structural explanation.

These aren't complaints, really. Why expect a self-professed guide of fewer than 200 pages to cover the breadth of issues that we might locate under the rubric of "democracy"? What I've laid out here is a general observation about the political thrust of these volumes—they are useful guides to the institutional and economic structures of globalization, and attempt to map practical alternatives, but aren't much for social and philosophical issues outside the purview of a narrow (if sharp) focus on class and economic globalization. I do think it's a shortcoming to view all these issues through the lens of class and economic hierarchies because so much goes missing from the picture, and I find the analysis falls short as a result, but perhaps it's best to take these guides at their word—as guides, or more properly, introductions to the aspects of these social conditions the authors are well-versed in and committed to changing, and take it upon yourself to look for the rest elsewhere because, honestly, reading is good for you and fun to boot. —Mimi Nguyen

To Have and Have Shit • Brent Johnson
75 pages • $4.00
Iowa Killed Buddy Holly
114 1/2 E. College St. Suite 10 • Iowa City, IA • 52240

I could make the childish dig about the link between the title of this book and the content, but I won't. On first impression, the eye-catching cover, cool cut and paste font, and cheap cover price had me thinking that *To Have and Have Shit* could be a punk rock success story. Author Brent Johnson is familiar with the independent publishing world, co-owning a small press shop in Iowa City called Iowa Killed Buddy Holly. Yet when I attempted to read ...Shit, I was disappointed.

"Lane asked me what the Tentative Squid house zine, *Richard Cory on Prozac*, was about. I told her that it wasn't about anything really. She said that it had to be about something. I told her that it didn't. We'll let everyone read it and we'll steal their interpretations—5 yrs we'll've a plot and meaning. 'Ooohhh, poo poo. How literary'."

I can tell you the plot of this novel. Broken up in to four sections, ...Shit attempts to relay the tale of a man and his break from society.

Autobiographical in tone, Johnson claws his way through an incoherent introduction of a lonely, emotionally disturbed as well as scattered character who lives under a bridge in Mt. AssMcCrackasville, Iowa. From here Johnson spews a jumbled account of the past four months of his life as an explanation of why he is under said bridge.

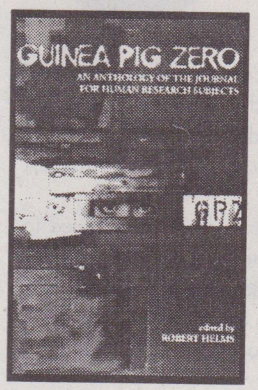
The bulk of this story is told in Part 2. Comprised of a "rant journal," a linear story is created only by the fact that each entry is dated in a consecutive order. Johnson reminisces from Iowa to Portland, Oregon in March 1999. There, he lives in the northeast section of town. He drinks until he blacks out, beats off often, hates his girlfriend, hates his job, loves/hates his roommates; a lifestyle that can be an interesting read. However, Johnson's lack of a consistent style, coupled with a roving, sporadic attention to detail, along with thin character development, leaves the reader feeling lost and confused. Johnson is readable when he stays focused, when he tells about a particular event. There are references to train hoppers, punk bands, jazz musicians, sex, but each of these small starts, tales that could evolve into an interesting story, are left hanging. By the end of Part 2, the character is left in Vancouver, Canada, hustling for money and fucked up.

Part 3 attempts to sum up by embracing the virtues of a new life under a bridge. Johnson tries to express that he has purged his past; however, not being told what happened to get him to Iowa detracts the reader from the conclusion.

Hoping that Part 4 might somehow tie it all together, I was dismayed to find a hyper poem of sorts—four pages of text pulled from various parts of the book, arranged without spacing. This could be used as Cliff-Notes for those not willing to make the commitment of reading all 75 pages of this book.

Four months of notes on scraps of paper arranged in chronological order does not make a novel. The seemingly random grammar mistakes, the use of w/ for the word "with" and "o" for "out", the vague paragraph endings, obscure references, rambling disjointed text; all of this indicates a lack of respect for the reader, a laziness. Johnson utilizes an esoteric style derivative of wankers who can't write. —Sara Double-Ears

Guinea Pig Zero • Robert Helms, editor
245 pages • $14.95
Garrett County Press • 828 Royal Street #248
New Orleans, LA • 70116



Robert Helms, who has "rented his healthy body to medical science" since 1996, serves as editor and chief contributor to *Guinea Pig Zero*, an anthology of his zine by the same name. The book includes a range of thoughtful, well-written material including Research Unit Report Cards, historical analysis of human experimentation, cautionary tales about deaths during botched experiments, short stories translated from French by Helms, and an account of his time spent with lepers in India.

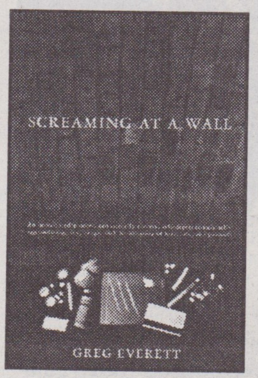
The research unit commentary can lapse into language bewildering to those unaccustomed to a medical environment: "Sometimes they're sloppy on the venipuncture. Contacts tell us that the regular day staff might lean out with the end of the needle while using a vacu-tainer..." However, this specificity provides a window into the guinea pigging experience and demonstrates an earnest desire to address and empower others in the same line of work. An interesting development detailed by Helms later in the book is a libel suit brought by a research facility after its flunking report card was reprinted in Harper's. The ensuing anti-censorship battle is both sobering and inspiring.

The book really gets going in the "Treadmill of History" section, where Helms engages in a little research of his own, of the library rather than medical type. In a style which is a refreshing mix of scholarly and accessible, Helms examines cases such as that of Alexis St. Martin. In 1822 St. Martin found himself on the wrong end of a loaded shotgun, resulting in a wound which required him to wear a plug in his stomach for the rest of his life so as not to have his chow spill out onto the floor. The doctor who healed St. Martin realized that his patient would make a perfect subject for studies on digestion, and thus began St. Martin's not-always-willing career as a guinea pig. Helms does a great job investigating the class implications of the actual case as well uncovering the bias of archivists who scathingly portrayed St. Martin as poor and irresponsible while holding up his employer as a kind and generous benefactor.

Helms also writes eloquently on the subject of human experimentation during wartime, and the ways that in both combat and medicine the term "experiment" is used to put a positive spin on situations where ineptitude on the part of those who have power leads to needless death on the part of those who don't. As King George II gears up for Gulf War II, it's particularly chilling to read about the horrible health effects of the war in Iraq, both on Iraqi citizens and on US soldiers who continue to suffer from experimental vaccines the US military gave them without their consent.

On a trip to India, Helms spends his time hanging out with a community of people with leprosy, and genuinely connects with them via his experiences as a guinea pig. But his ability to find parallels can occasionally take a wrong turn. Helms talks about the similarities between guinea pigging and the sex industry in an overly ha-ha tone—"Judging by my compensation I'm higher up than a crack-whore, lower than a porno film performer...I'm just another piece of meat to the corporation that pays me to be penetrated"—which glibly glosses over the intense emotional and societal import of sex work. And, though it is not often, Helms sometimes seems to not have his empathy radar on at all. Throughout the book he decries the stigma around putting his body to work for research, yet displays his own judgment about study participants testing antidepressants: "'Brain sluts' are pretty disgusting, when you stop to think about it, becoming retarded for money like that." However, these off notes are very rare, and are perhaps the more noticeable because Helms is generally so appealing in his ability to find the history between the lines, to represent the subjects of experiments as protagonists of their own stories.
—Melissa Klein

Screaming at a Wall • Greg Everett
448 pages • $13.00
Grundle Ink Publications • PO Box 231
Chico, CA • 95927



I carry a marbled composition notebook ($1.25 at the drugstore around the corner) with me most of the time. When I can, I fill a couple of pages with the events of my workaday existence, plans for tomorrow and the day after, and whatever creative bug has latched on to me at that particular moment. It's a useful habit, but I can't help but wonder what's going to happen to them after I'm hit by a car, knifed by a jealous husband, or dead from a one-two punch of old age and ennui. What will the executors of my estate think once they've thumbed through the grand tale of my life? Will they read a sample paragraph and huck it straight into the fire? That in mind, I've started to "introduce" recurring characters and offer an explanation of what might be unfamiliar people, places, and things ("Maximum Rock 'n' Roll, a popular 'punk rock' magazine that I was affiliated with in the late 20th century...") to make it an easier read. I'm concerned that my journals will hold as much literary appeal as the Ma-Mo section in the Yellow Pages.

I pulled a grubby fanzine out of the MRR free bin last month that billed itself as a "punk rock autobiography" of a street-level thug with at least one axe to grind. It was nothing more than a dozen photocopied sheets stapled in the corner, a grainy photo of the author (in eyeliner and studded leather) on the back cover. Not edited, or even spell-checked, printed in the ugliest of typefaces. It presentation was less than impressive, but the story was fast, down, dirty, and lurid, involving the carnal exploits and drugged-out excess of a teenager with one foot in the grave and another on a banana peel. I knew he had to have survived to type the story and operate the stapler, but by page three I was legitimately concerned for his safety.

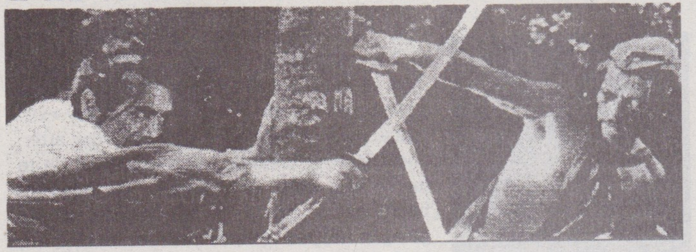
Screaming at a Wall represents the opposite expression of the autobiographical impulse: a square-bound, slick, and profesh edition of 448 pages that one can shelve next to Edith Wharton and Graham Greene. It relates the exploits and adventures of its author from the first uncertain days of junior high school, through further teen experimentation with beer, pot and mind-fucking hallucinogens, past graduation, into college and up to first rumblings of impending adulthood and responsibility. Along the path, he falls in and out of love with a line-up of girls, fucks shit up with his friends, muses on the nature of art, cracks wise about the MTV generation, and develops and then loses an admiration for Hot Animal Machine Henry Rollins. All told first in person present tense, in the moment. Plug in your virtual reality goggles and view the world through the eyes of one Greg Everett, from the inside his noggin looking out. You've read enough personal zines to understand the terrain it covers. As per his suggestion, I read some of it while listening to the 'Flag, but draw the line far before Marilyn Manson.

Reviewing self-published indie autobios is a delicate business in that one could easy start reviewing the life of the author ("...too bad you couldn't have worked in a car chase during your second semester of 10th grade, or taken that one walk-on character and run with him...") rather than how the words read next to each other. I won't.

Everett is a wiseacre not afraid to make fun of himself along with everyone else, and boasts a sarcastic streak a mile across...always a benefit, to my mind. That said, some of the pages of *Screaming at a Wall* could have and should have stayed in the marbled composition notebook where they were written. You gotta save some material for when you're a 70-year-old tubercular invalid confined to a cork-lined room. —Jeff A. Heermann

MOVIES

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



KILL FOR PEACE

As an American president rallies the country into a second war within less than two years of public office, dispassionate voices are becoming increasingly rare. Pit-bull chief arms inspector Scott Ritter, putative chief of UNSCOM (the UN agency sent to dismantle Saddam Hussein's arsenal after their invasion of Kuwait), would seem to be the last person to weigh in on the side of the Iraqis. He felt so strongly about the uneven war of public opinion that he directed the new documentary, **In Shifting Sands: The Truth About UNSCOM and the Disarming of Iraq.** It has the look and feel of a PBS Front Line production—though it will almost certainly never air on US television.

The film's low public profile owes less to its forbiddingly long title than its point of view: that Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war was effectively destroyed as early as 1995, and all future rhetoric against Iraq was wrangled by the US as a pretext to military action.

As we can imply from his on-screen narration, Ritter is the last person to accept the Iraqi's word on anything. Early on, when all missile ordinance was claimed to be destroyed, he sniffed his way to a graveyard of buried missiles rusting in the desert sands. His search for chemical/biological stockpiles was equally successful. And when it came to locating the elusive paperwork that might cross-check his results, the Iraqi government's reluctance to provide information was met by the inspectors' dogged research. The trail finally led to boxes of "lost" documents, which were soon digested and analyzed.

At times, Iraq was blatant in its defiance. Inspectors would be stalled while military trucks stole away with materiel—more chances lost. While Iraq had cooperated in certain levels, its culture of secrecy only added to to the mistrust that was becoming a hallmark of UN/Iraq relations.

Despite all this, what surprised Ritter and his colleagues was that they seemed to have found just about everything they were looking for. A full ninety percent of Iraq's military capacity was destroyed; with the remaining 10% spread out in scattered shards across the country, Iraq was effectively disarmed. But while a United Nations agreement promised that the embargo would be lifted as soon as evidence of disarmament had been satisfied, no such actions were being contemplated. In the meantime, people were starving.

Now, America took the initiative in seeding skepticism about Iraqi compliance. Inspectors were given old intelligence on buried arms on remote desert locations that turned out to be bone dry. The US provided equipment that could scan multiple frequencies of radio traffic, and hopefully locate additional sources of hidden weaponry. Finally, unable to locate that secret cache that Iraq claimed didn't exist, the US turned to a new tactic: Iraq had always been extremely sensitive about allowing foreigners into ministry buildings, so why not cast suspicion on the presidential palaces?

It was, of course, a fishing expedition, but it was guaranteed to pull in a handsome catch. It was common knowledge that Iraqi leadership would never allow inspectors into their presidential palaces. If inspectors were to demand carte blanche to these areas, they would only be refused, and that would be reason enough for retaliatory military action.

The fact that Scott Ritter's nearly 5 million dollar film was partly bankrolled by Iraqi-American businessman Shakir Al-Khafaji (said by some to have ties to the Iraqi president) can't be ignored. At the same time, **In Shifting Sands...** shouldn't be overlooked as a corrective to accepted notions on UN/US involvement with Iraq. Early on in the relationship, the United States was more than willing to overlook Iraq's ghastly human rights record (which included using its own citizens as guinea pigs) in the interest of oil. While it would be childishly naive to regard Iraq's leadership as harmless and peace-loving, it would be equally naive to think that the US policy toward Iraq has nothing to do with oil. Seen with a critical eye, Scott Ritter's film bears more than its share of similar insights.

Nick Broomfield's new documentary, **Biggie and Tupac,** may not exactly address matters of world security, but its skein pulls in racism, corruption, and organized crime—all in all, not a bad catch. With **Kurt and Courtney,** he dissected unexplained issues relating with Kurt Cobain's "suicide," and exposed layers of corruption in the LA police department with **Heidi Fleiss: Hollywood Madam.** This time around, it's all about murder.

The official story should be familiar even to those who (like me) don't follow or even particularly care for hip-hop. Almost six years ago, home-boys from the 'hood Christopher Wallace (a.k.a. Notorious B.I.G. or "Biggie") and Tupac Shakur were murdered in what were characterized as gang-orchestrated hits. As it happens, they were once best friends—until Tupac relocated to the West Coast and Biggie, in an attempt to fortify his tough gangsta' image, dubbed his pal an enemy.

In his lyrics and in his life, Christopher Wallace had always stretched his personal truth for the sake of image. Even his bigger-than-life size seemed to stretch reality a bit. Despite his public image of having been raised on New York's mean streets in hunger and poverty, his mother claims he never missed a meal. (No revelation there.) In fact, he thrived in an upper-middle class home with few wants. Christopher Wallace was what you'd call a "nice" boy—not necessarily the image a hip-hop star strives for.

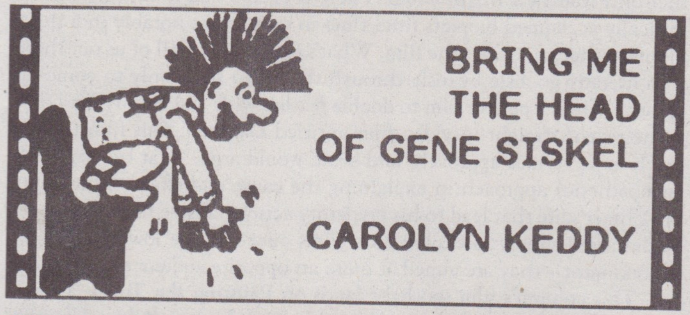
Tupac Shakur enjoyed many of the same opportunities, but he fast-tracked his life toward music and drama. According to friends, sleepy-eyed Tupac was so charismatic that when he paid attention to you, it was almost like a gift. He never lost touch with the jokester in his personality—though some claim there was also a darker part of him that manifested from time to time after his NY expatriation.

For quite some time, the case appeared to have been solved. For

Nick Broomfield, rumors of a larger conspiracy drew him into the tight community that surrounded both men. The idea that the consecutive murders in September 1996 and March of the next year seemed could have been the result of street gangs seemed wrong.

When Biggie defected to New York's Death Row Record label, he was also aligning himself with its executive producer, the much more notorious Marion "Suge" Knight (now serving a sentence in prison). Knight pulled together a cadre of lieutenants, as well as several cops who worked concurrently as Death Row enforcers. (This would lead to conflict-of-interest convictions for several officers.) Suge and his cohorts thrived on their '30s gangland image—but the murders themselves were remarkably clean. Not unlike the kind of work some cops might do.

Biggie and Tupac has all of the things that make a Nick Broomfield film so much fun: dryly ironic interviews, cameras running out of film, a cast of duplicitous interviewees, and the creepy feeling that someone is going to knock off the director. The admirable thing about Broomfield's films aren't necessarily that they draw the correct conclusions (the evidence for his case seems to comes just short of being proof); it's the exhilaration of watching a real-life mystery unfold before your eyes. And maybe the idea that you have the inside scoop.



Whatever It Is, I'm Against It

I love a conspiracy. Not that I am ever interested in the solution. I just enjoy every cockamamie theory people can come up with to explain what they can't explain. JFK's my favorite, of course. Now, after seeing **Biggie and Tupac**, I love the Suge Knight killing Tupac and Notorious B.I.G. theory. Knight projects the image of a guy who would kill someone for leaving his label. Remember the story of him hanging Vanilla Ice out a window? But it seems like it may be more of a bully syndrome.

Director Nick Broomfield's films are always the same. He is a very aggressive guy who only seems to be able to dig up the sketchiest people related to the case. But it sure is entertaining. In **Kurt and Courtney** he tries to make his case with the help of Courtney's father, who seems to hold a grudge against her, and El Duce of the Mentors, who claims Courtney offered him money to kill Kurt.

In **Biggie and Tupac**, there is a former police officer who resigned when he supposedly found evidence of police corruption that the department would not investigate. He still has the evidence, but is holding out to sell it to the highest bidder. Perhaps Suge Knight? There is also Biggie's bodyguard, now retired and fearing for his life. He was with Biggie the night he was killed. He doesn't seem to feel that guilty for not doing his job, but he can identify the police officer who he thinks shot Biggie.

I find the mothers to be the most interesting. On one hand, you have Biggie's mom, who is fully cooperative with Broomfield—even going so far as to force friends of Biggie to speak with him. Tupac's mother, a former Black Panther, will not have anything to do with the film. Broomfield interviews Tupac's deadbeat father, who insists that Tupac's mother is a crack addict—yet he was the one who left when Tupac was young and got back in touch with him after he was famous. The film leads you to believe that Tupac's mom is still in cahoots with Death Row Records. After I did some of my own investigation, I found out that Tupac's mom sued Suge Knight and got back all the rights to Tupac's albums. That kind of negated the whole crack addict theory for me.

The climax of **Biggie and Tupac** comes when Broomfield, after having been turned down by Death Row Records for an interview with owner Suge Knight, shows up at the prison where Knight is incarcerated, figuring he already has permission to film there so maybe he can get that interview. You've got to admire this guy's fearlessness and persistence. He goes about the grounds with the warden in search of Knight. When they finally track him down, the warden goes to talk to Suge, asking Broomfield to wait where he is. Of course, Broomfield can't miss an opportunity like this, so he walks over to Knight and tries to introduce himself. He is immediately sent away, but fortunately for us, his microphone was still on so we get to hear the short exchange.

The most unbelievable thing is that Knight agrees to do the interview. He doesn't want to talk about Tupac or Biggie. Instead he delivers a thinly veiled threat to Snoop Dogg. That little bit of interview combined with a clip from the Death Row website advertising Knight's release from jail and another seeming threat to Snoop Dogg are the only pieces that make a case for Broomfield's theory, but it sure was a fun ride. Watch out, Snoop Dogg.

We all need bullies, right? The schoolyard would have been so boring without them. What about in the workplace? I can relate to that. After seeing **Secretary,** I am glad I only have to deal with passive-aggressive types.

Secretary is the story of Lee Holloway, a young woman just released from a mental institution for a cutting fetish. One day she cut too much while her mother was in the room and they sent her away. Lee responds to an ad for a secretary at a lawyer's office. She is hired and is soon involved in a masochistic relationship with her boss, E. Edward Grey. He starts circling typos in the letters she has done for him with a red marker, a lá elementary school. He gets her to dig his notes out of the trash, only to tell her when she has recovered them that he had another copy. He gives her lessons on how to answer the phone, how to dress, how to behave. She discovers she likes it.

Their relationship is interesting in a voyeuristic way. Nothing I'd ever want to be involved in, but I don't mind sneaking a peak. I think it is similar to why I like reading Irvine Welsh novels and listening to records by Three Stoned Men. These other worlds are fascinating, even if I don't ever delve into that territory.

Then **Secretary** goes in the worst direction. The movie plays up the societal reasons why Lee enjoys her S&M relationship. The obvious one is that her father is a drunk who embarrasses her and doesn't love her. Her mother can't deal with her. The absolute worst of all of them, E. Edward Grey, is really in love with her but can't deal with his emotions. I realize explaining this type of relationship is done to make the movie more palpable for a general movie-going audience, but it completely ruined the direction **Secretary** was going in. When Lee sits at Grey's desk for a couple of days to prove her love and he eventually comes around, admits he loves her, and they live happily ever after, I was thoroughly disappointed.

8 femmes (8 Women) goes even further in the predictable world of filmmaking. This film by self-proclaimed misogynist François Ozon

was so boring, I wasn't even able to get up the energy to be insulted. Not that there was anything to be insulted about.

8 femmes is an attempt at making a Pedro Almodóvar without having any imagination, humor, or understanding of people. It's is the story of one man who is murdered and the eight women in his life who are the suspects. Due to various predictable reasons the women are trapped in the house, each accusing the other until all their dirty secrets are revealed.

The big secrets? (Please stop reading if you don't want me to give it away.) That each one has been having an affair with the man without the others knowing. Which is hard to believe, since everyone seems to know how many times each person leaves her room during the night. When it was revealed that the oldest daughter Suzon was pregnant, I suspected that her father was the father of the child. When it was revealed a few minutes later that he was, the entire audience gasped with shock. I can't believe something that predictable caught so many people by surprise.

When an interesting twist came at the end of **8 femmes,** I was already too disinterested to even care. It was a good one, but Ozon needed to work on bringing the entire film up to that level. He had some great French actresses, a good-looking film, nice costumes, and a good concept, but he just wasted it all.

If you're in the mood to see a French film that has actually been pissing off a lot of people, go see Jean-Luc Godard's latest **Éloge de l'amour** (In Praise Of Love). People's reactions during a film always crack me up and add to my viewing experience. During **Éloge de l'amour** half the audience left before the film was half over. The man sitting behind me who was acting like a film snob before the film fell asleep and was snoring.

Éloge de l'amour begins with a filmmaker, Edgar, attempting to make a film about the stages of love: first meeting, physical passion, the separation, and the reconciliation. There is a lot of discussion about the film's theme and how it will be pulled off. Edgar auditions a woman who automatically assumes she will be playing the part of the young woman. There is something that isn't right about her. Edgar realizes he has another woman in mind, but when he tracks her down, she is not interested. Edgar learns shortly after that she has committed suicide. Edgar begins to think of when he first met her. He was doing research for a school paper and she was arguing with some Hollywood filmmakers about licensing her grandparent's story from World War II.

Éloge de l'amour is not an easy film to get into. The rhythm is similar to a conversation. The characters speak without really having their conclusions worked out. The little action of the story is broken up with repetitive chapter cards. When the film moves to the flashback sequence, it leaves the black and white film behind for oversaturated color video. All of these make it a difficult film for American movie audiences to be able to relate to. As I've seen with Secretary and 8 femmes, people want it all spelled out for them. The Steven Spielberg, Hollywood film and America-bashing doesn't seem to help either.

I was able to get myself into the rhythm and really enjoy the film. Godard is getting older and that is an obvious influence in Éloge de l'amour, but it seemed to hit on a few things I have been thinking about lately, particularly the blind patriotism of people these days. It's too easy to get outraged at the stupidity of the masses when there is so much information available to them and they just don't access it. It's hard to believe people resist the urge to think for themselves. And if Mrs. Schindler really didn't get paid for Schindler's List, she better get a lawyer.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to me c/o MRR PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. You can also reach me by e-mail at carolynmrr@juno.com

This month's column has only one film to discuss in any detail, but I do want to call your attention to a couple of recent straight to video films that are as good as most of the crap coming to your nearby multiplex this fall and winter. The first one I'd recommend would be **Ted Bundy**, which is a biopict about the infamous serial killer (a term first coined in the media specifically for the Ted Bundy case) directed by the great Matthew Bright. Matthew Bright is the mastermind behind **Freeway**, but more importantly he was the creative force behind the infinitely better **Freeway 2**, which is a classic among classic exploitation films. Freeway 2 manages to be a teen exploitation film, a drug exploitation Film, a women's prison exploitation film, a homoerotic exploitation film, a buddy film, and a road movie all wrapped into one. **Ted Bundy** manages to go from factual to impossibly embellished, too much so to be very accurate. This is just from one scene to the next, but somehow it works in painting a picture of a psychotic serial killer like Ted Bundy in a way that only Matthew Bright could. There is even a nod to other, far more critically acclaimed biopicts from time to time, most notably in a short montage that concludes the film. What's fortunate for all of us out there who literally go aisle by aisle through the video store only to come up empty, there is a perfect film to double feature with **Ted Bundy**, and that is the recent straight-to-video film entitled **Dahmer**. This film takes a much more serious approach, and some would argue a far too sensitive (sympathetic) approach in explaining the cause and effect of incidents in Dahmer's life that lead to his predatory actions. These films are not to be dismissed simply as exploitation films aimed at the lowest common denominator—they are aimed at quite an opposite audience.

This column's film spotlight lands on **Painting the Town**, a thoroughly entertaining documentary from director Andrew Behar. The film focuses in on a man by the name of Richard Osterweil. Richard Osterweil is a painter, and a cab driver, but what he is most known for and is best at is sneaking into exclusive, invite-only functions for the very wealthy. A good portion of the film is spent listening to Richard Osterweil wax poetic about all of the many cons he's used to gain entrance into these exclusive functions, and most of all about the food, or the "spread," as he puts it. That alone would be the makings for an interesting film, but **Painting the Town** picks up momentum when the film delves even further into its main character's life and the habits and interests that drive him to be the way that he is. New York City, the setting of **Painting the Town**, is almost like a second character in this film, and its own habits and eccentricities are reflected not only by what Richard Osterweil does, but also in his methods, and ultimately, his objectives. This is one excellent example of first-rate independent filmmaking to be sure, and is as deserving as any film I've seen this year with greater accolades and greater distribution. (A Padded Cell Picture, 805-640-8192; www.hyperactive.com/ptt.htm)

Punk Movie Night #2 at Gilman in Berkeley is still scheduled for December 6, and I am awaiting your submissions. It seemed so far off when I first wrote about it in this column, but now it feels like Punk Movie Night #2 is biting at our heels, so if you had any intention of being a part of this year's event, then the time to act is immediately. Save on postage and email me at Disintegration@wethepunx.com, or if you are so inclined, then please feel free to send videotapes directly to PMB #419, 1442A Walnut Street, Berkeley, CA 94709.

I'll sign off this month by assuring you that I am updating my website— www.wethepunx.com—slowly but surely, and eventually that will also mean updates to the Punk Movie Nights column site.

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THE AVENGERS "Open Your Eyes" CD [$12.00]
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BIKINI KILL "Peel Sessions" 7" [$4.00]
Different versions of three songs; "Star Bellied Boy", "Demirep", and "New Radio" than what appeared on their records, plus one song " Not Right Now" that I couldnt find on anything else. Neat-o!

THE ABSENTEES "Illegal Listening Device: 1979-2000" CD [$11.00]
37 tracks of madness - demented lyrics with crazed vocals from a very pissed Rocco Roll and crew. Like a missing link between late 70's punk and the early hardcore of the 80's. Fast, snotty, and out for revenge!

THE DISTRACTION "Calling All Radios" CD [$10.00]
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Just Added: ASTRAL ANARCHY (NAZIS FROM MARS and more), JONNY CAT RECORDS (TRIGGERS, FLIP-TOPS, WENDY-O Tribute, and more), PUKE RECORDS (LARRY 7"s and LP) plus new from DETOUR and PTBI!

coming soon: DOG MEAT RECORDS (Australia), KICK-N-PUNCH RECORDS (DENMARK), KANGAROO RECORDS (The Netherlands), SCREAMING APPLE RECORDS (Germany) and new releases from HOSTAGE RECORDS and DIRTNAP RECORDS plus a whole shitload more that we just can't remember.

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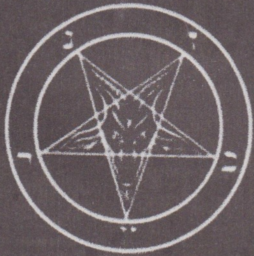

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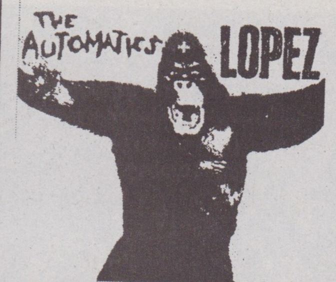

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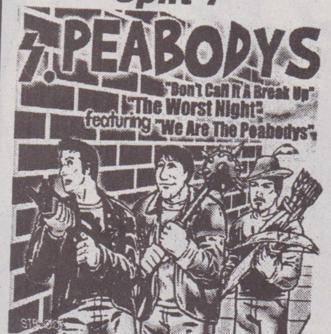

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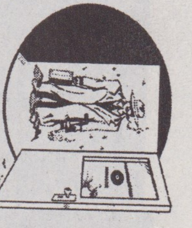

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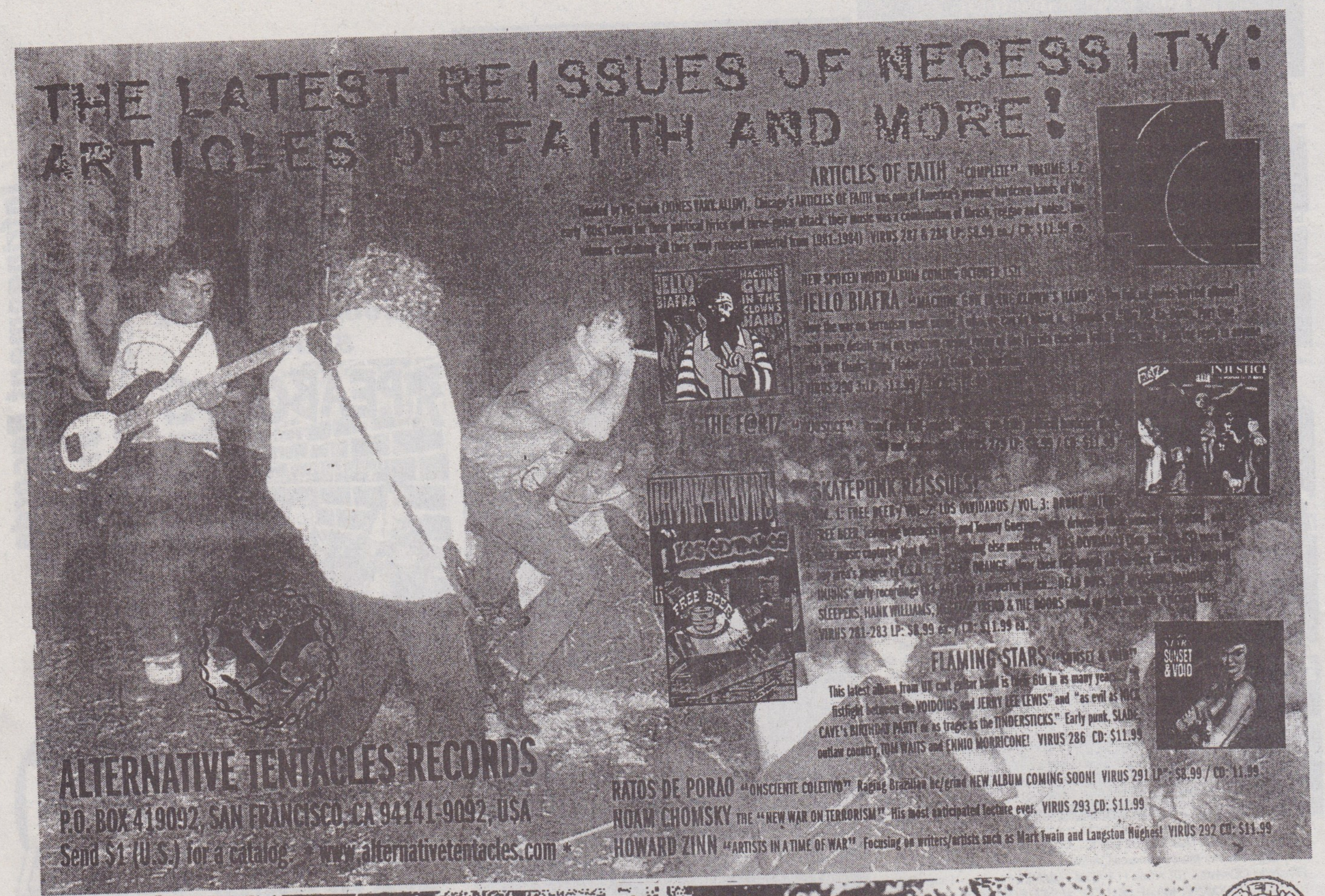
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RECORDS

Send MRR your release for review. Don't send wimpy, arty, emo, metal or MTV corporate rock shit here. Don't have your label give us follow-up calls as to whether we received and are reviewing a record. We want punk, garage, hardcore, and will review all those that fall within our area of coverage. Include post-paid price and contact information when mailing. If possible, send two copies of vinyl records (one for MRR, one for the reviewer). *We will review CDs, but just CD-only releases.* If on vinyl and CD format, send us the vinyl. We are reviewing cassettes again, so send HIGH quality cassette-only releases directly to: Erin Yanke, PO Box 1113, Portland, OR 97207. *No reviews of test pressings or promo CDs without final artwork.* Staff: (PA) Peter Avery, (TB) Tim Brooks, (RC) Rob Coons, (CC) Carl Cordova, (AC) Arwen Curry, (AD) Andy Darling, (DD) Dr. Dante, (EL) Elliot Lange, (JA) Jake Filth, (JF) Jonathan Floyd, (JH) Jeff Heermann, (VH) Vince Horner, (KK) Kenny Kaos, (CK) Carolyn Keddy, (DL) Dulcinea Loudmouth, (RL) Ray Lujan, (BM) Bobby Manic, (MM) Megan March, (HM) Hal MacLean, (AM) Allan McNaughton, (WN) Willie Nelson, (DP) Donna Poole, (SR) Sandra Ramos, (SP) Spencer Rangitsch, (WR) Will Risk, (BR) Bruce Roehrs, (AS) Andrew Scott, (SS) Steve Spinali, (MT) Mike Thorn, (MX) Max Tremblay, (RW) Ryan Wells, (SW) Shane White, (RY) Rema Young.

17TH CLASS - "…Will Eat Your Children's Brains!" EP
Raw as fuck hardcore punk from Rochester who sound much like an infantile SICK PLEASURE. Fuck, smash, destroy, blap, crack… I'm so down with this. More punk fuk'n shitz like this please and less overproduced garbage masquerading as punk please! Send beer, nachos and money to them now! (MT)
(Punks Before Profits, 99 Custer St., Buffalo, NY 14214)

THE ABORTED - "I Don't Want Your Life" EP
This is weird. It is just some good old-fashioned dirty, badly-produced punk with back-and-forth screechy/growly vox. Lyrics aren't stupid, but, something strange is going on here. Buy this record. See if you can figure out the oddity. (JA)
(Aborted, P.O. Box 3435, Fullerton, CA. 92834)

ACCIDENT ON THE EAST LANCS - "We Want It Legalized/Tell Me What You Want"
Bravo for the Last Year's Youth label, which has actually tracked down hyper-obscure UK bands and gotten reissues out of 'em. Here's another, ACCIDENT having two nice 'n' rare UK '77-style punk singles. This is the rarer of the two, two great surging tracks the first of which is still quite relevant today. Just get cancer or glaucoma, you'll know what I mean. The "hippie" reasons for legalization have faded away. Weird, how many old punk 7" get you talking about politics in the here and now? (RW)
(Last Year's Youth)

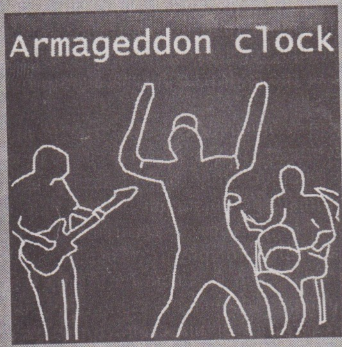
ACTIVE MINDS/JESUS CROST - split EP
ACTIVE MINDS from England gives us two speedy tunes about religion and technology. From Holland, JESUS CROST magnificently delivers a much slower, mellower political punk rock with hypnotic dual vocals. They've got two songs about consumption and an analysis at the crust-punk scene and one cover of CRACKED COP SKULLS. A great DIY EP! (SR)
(Filth Ear, c/o Tim Leten, Minervastraat 14, 2640 Mortsel, BELGIUM)

AGATHOCLES/DIN ADDICT - split EP
If you're not familiar with the Belgian Mince-core legends, AGATHOCLES, by now then chances are you're either living under a rock or you've got better taste in music than me. Anyway, the AGATHOCLES side is three songs long in their classic style. If you know 'em and love 'em then you'll like this. DIN ADDICT, from Hungary, play much in the same style as AGATHOCLES, except faster on this EP, but their vocals are so over-the-top they sound literally like the singer is puking his lyrics. This rules! (WM)
(Nuclear BBQ Party, 3816 E. Dozier St., LA, CA, 90063, www.nuclearbbq.cbj.net)

ALL SYSTEMS GO – "Mon Chi Chi" CD
The second full length from this band featuring John Kastner of DOUGHBOYS fame. Having added a new bass player who writes with an indie/college bent, there is a little variety here. This still rocks though with great hooks as always. A welcome melodic release. (RL)
(Bad Taste, www.badtasterecords.se)

ALMOST THERE/SAVING FACE - split EP
I am irked. SAVING FACE started out as a perfectly harmless, perhaps even rather catchy pop-punk band, and I was even willing to forgive them for "Slut Song," which essentially is just them saying "slut" over and over. Then they went and ruined our blossoming relationship by rapping the first verse of "The Humpty Hump" by DIGITAL UNDERGROUND during their breakdown and referring to the singer's ex-girlfriend as a "ho" just because she left him. Petty and stupid. ALMOST THERE are, despite the name, not some kind of running-themed sports-hardcore band (which, now that I think about it, would have been kinda funny), but are reminiscent of BAD RELIGION if Greg Graffin was a pimply pre-adolescent boy who couldn't yet articulate himself. (MX)
(High Fidelity, P.O. Box 1071 Grover Beach, CA 93489, www.highfidelityrecords.com)

ANAZOMBIES - CD
Sounds like girl MISFITS fans, plus one boy drummer got together and are having some fun with it. I could see these guys on tour with the DISTILLERS or something. The girls got some decent pipes for sure. The



problem is that this is just a little too Hot Topic—you know, way too peppy plaid-with-creepers for the likes of jaded old me. (DL)
(X-Communicated, www.xcommunicated.biz)

ANGSTZUSTAND - "Ohne Dich Sind Wir Allein" LP
Bass heavy hardcore from Germany. screaming vocals over powerful guitar and drums that are heavy on the cymbals. At times they almost sound like URANUS but there is a melodic slickness that takes over and it never happens. You can't be sure if they are going to do some chugga part or break into a flowing guitar octave thing. Well recorded, well played and the lyrics are printed in German and English. (PA)
(Alerta Antifascista, P.O. Box 2318, 24913 Flensburg, GERMANY, www.angstzustand.com)

ANTICHRIST - "Seein' Black" EP
Poland's ANTICHRIST are more furious than ever on this five song release. While the music is more-evil-than-thou metal, reminding me of bands like the HAUNTED, the lyrics are poignant punk commentaries on society in general, and specific ills of life in Poland. Awesome stuff, pummeling and vicious, with rabid dog vocals and crushing guitars. No self respecting fan of crusty metal hardcore should be without this release. (WN)
(Dissonant Sound Industries, PO Box 2353, Portland, OR 97208)

ANTI DIFRANCOS/ASS END OFFEND -split EP
ASS END OFFEND, holy sweet Darby!!! These Montana punks are the fuck child of EL DOPA and early DIE KREUZEN. It's a ugly, gorgeous child. Crazy stupid fresh back and forth, overlapping dual male vox. I'm moving to Missoula. ANTI DIFRANCOS wear masks on stage, which nowadays is a good, maybe dangerous thing. The tone and direction this band are going in will be great. For now, it is a little formulaic. Everything we love about anarchistic punk, just needs some time to develop. Support Montana Anarchy! (JA)
(Poisoned Candy, P.O.Box 9263, Missoula, MT.59807)

ANTIDOTE - "My Life" LP
Nice picture disc. Not to be confused with the 80s New York Hardcore Krishnas, ANTIDOTE from Holland play speedy spikey apolitical hard punk. As far as that genre goes they're one of the best, up there with the VIRUS, the UNSEEN, and the CASUALTIES. This appears to be a compilation of tracks recorded between '97 and '99 that was previously released on Charged records a while back. Well, now it's available as a picture disc... Punk Rock!!! (AD)
(Dirty Faces, Volker Jaedicke, Universitatstr 16, 44789 Bochum, GERMANY)

ANTIDOTE - "Let's Get Drunk" EP
New snazzy picture disc reissue from these Euro spikey tops (just a quick note: picture discs are not punk). The picture is of a drunk punk with a mohawk—which in my mind is exactly what punk rock should be about. I'm a big fan of a lot of '82 revival bands like these, The VIRUS and The UNSEEN because they are fast and aggressive. These punks sound like NEGATIVE APPROACH mixed with ONE WAY SYSTEM. Wish I wasn't a balding old fucker so I could spike my hair to these dudes. Punk rock mate. (TB)
(Dirty Faces, Volker Jaedicke, Universitatstr 16, 44789 Bochum, GERMANY)

ANTiSEEN - "Drastic/E.P. Royalty" 2xEP
.......I've never been into the likes of these little balls of cock scum....but I have an Italian friend named Alice who loves these guys so much that he sucked Jeff Clayton's drunk prick and let him cum in his mouth.......twice....!!!! But that's what I think this band is all about anyway.......hot, passionate "man-love".....in the first degree.....!!!!! What you got here is a gatefold double seven inch re-ish of what I believe is their first two singles.....all done up in a jock-strap with a glass of warm piss......just the way pops used to like it...... (SW)
(TKO, 3216 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221)

ANTiSEEN- "Drastic/ E.P. Royalty" 2xEP
ANTiSEEN is the most important rock and roll band to emerge from the Deep South in the last twenty years!!! As the leading purveyors of scum punk in that loosely organized band of outlaws known as the Confederacy of Scum, ANTISEEN has taken the hell-fire and evil bloodlines from JERRY LEE LEWIS and coupled it with the punk threat of AGNOSTIC FRONT and G.G. ALLIN. ANTISEEN is the top dog in this yard!!! (BR)
(TKO, 3216 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA 23221)

APATIA NO - "Cuando El Rumor Es Informacion" EP
Think you're busy, punk rocker? Four singles and three splits in the last three years—that's what APATIA NO has been up to down in Venezuela. If you're familiar with their stuff (or not) it's up to par, never fear—driving, pissed protest punk, checking in about fucking jobs, fucking major labels, fucking capitalist swine. Up with: the right to choose, the punks, living free, and "libertarian" society (always disconcerting, this translation from the Spanish, but I believe the meaning refers more to anarchy and less to ultra-capitalism). Great package, good shit, on a roll. Shit on a roll. (AC)
(Noseke, Johnny, AP 64670, Z.P. 1064-A, Caracas, VENEZUELA, apatia_no@hotmail.com)

ARTICLE NINE - "Fueled by Anger" EP
These kids slam through four tracks of charging crust with harsh growling vocals. They are from Sweden and they have that Swedish D-beat thing down pat. An average release at best. (RC)
(c/o 0Persson, Kummelbatan 238, 253 60 Ramlosa, SWEDEN; article_nine@hotmail.com)

ARMAGEDDON CLOCK - "Changed So Fast" EP
Yeah! More great Finnish punk rock! ARMAGEDDON CLOCK plays mid-tempo punk rock. The guitar parts are melodic with cool little riffs all over the place, while the vocals scream NEGATIVE APPROACH! The band does a great job of keeping the songs interesting without being obnoxious. This EP had a side labeled 2001 and a side labeled 2002, and I actually liked the songs from 2001 a lot better. The layout on the record was a bit boring, I thought they could have pushed it a little farther. Overall, a really really good record. I hope there is more to come. (WR)
(Audio Riot, c/o Mikko Honkaniemi, Gummeruksenkatu 5 c 86, 40100 Jyvaskyla, FINLAND)

ASS-END OFFEND - "Becoming Our Destruction" EP
Tasty. I hear some FROM ASHES RISE parts, but with vocals more screamed than grunted, and a little bit of pretentiousness-free ORCHID comes through as well. I'm not sure what you would call that (I've heard the term "emo-violence" tossed around, but I can't say that without laughing). I call it fucking good, and it makes me want to hear more of what the Montana hardcore scene has to offer. (MX)
(917 Patrick Creek Road, Kalispell, MT 59901, http://mtpunk.com/aeo)

ASTRID OTO – "Discography" CD

This record is a collection of ASTRID OTO's EP's. For those of you who don't know, ASTRID OTO was another one of those Aaron Cometbus bands (I'd say side project, but then I would have to have a real project for Aaron). You all know the formula, simple, bouncy, punk rock with wishful yet observant lyrics. ASTRID OTO was is/was always a charming little punk band that has a sound that sounds better on vinyl than CD, and no that doesn't hold true for everybody. (JF)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604)

AVAIL - "Front Porch Stories" LP

In the grand tradition of INQUISITION and the (YOUNG) PIONEERS, AVAIL are still doing their damndest to make sure that Richmond, VA isn't just remembered as the capital of the Confederacy. While AVAIL is probably my least-favorite of those three bands, they still crank out some good punk rock influenced in almost equal parts by folk and melodic hardcore. While clearly not life-changing, this is still a solid record that deserves your attention. (MX)
(Fat Wreck, P.O. Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119-3690, www.fatwreck.com)

AZTECTWOSTEP - "My Dear Buddy" EP

Do not be fooled when you come across this multicolor triangle-fold indie- rock looking record by the band that makes me think of nerd-glasses-wearing indie rock bands. Instead of flipping right past this clear vinyl gem, open it up and check out the lyrics to songs like "Black Metal" and laugh your ass off, then read the words to social critiques like "Bert and Ernie" or "Anonymous." By this point you may notice that AZTECTWOSTEP perform songs written by both MINOR THREAT (the fastest "Out of Step" ever) and MOB 47. If you aren't sold yet, then let me assure you that these 11 songs thrash harder than anything you've heard this week. The raw recording helps this record whip the listener (me, in this case) into a frenzy. Think a much heavier CHARLES BRONSON (but nowhere near as pretentious)...fuck, think whatever you like, just check this shit out. (WN)
(Immigrant Sun, PO Box 150711, Brooklyn, NY 11215)

B.ABUSE - "Connemara" LP

This may be a flashback record for many people. It's emo in a mid 90s sort of way. Quiet parts with vocal samples (mostly of civil rights speeches) become semi-melodic hardcore parts. Two vocalists, one with a scream and one with a growl. This is for people who still listen to their CURRENT and ORDINATION OF AARON records. Outside of the first song, which has flow problems, the record comes together nicely. (PA)
(Hombre Lobo, Postfach 10 31 17, 60101 Frankfurt/Main, GERMANY, Hombre-Lobo@gmx.de)

BAD MACHINE - "Rip Your Heart" LP

Don't really know shit about this band, but I can tell you this, these are not pretty men. They got this kind of scraggily hair and beat up cowboy boots look that's somehow looks totally Euro. BAD MACHINE blazes fairly hi-energy rock 'n' roll, but really don't show a lot of distinction. One of the guys is wearing a HELLACOPTERS shirt, and that kind of explains the story here. The tunes, their look, the album packaging just seems way too contrived like a rock 'n' roll fantasy gone painfully wrong. (DL)
(Dead Beat, PO Box 283, Los Angeles, CA 90078)

BASEBALL FURIES - "Greater Than Ever" LP

These boys recently relocated to my miserable sweet home Chicago, and as far as I know practice in the basement of Mr. Renders old crib in Humboldt Park. You know the place—kitty corner to that lovely corner store where a good number of the local area hookers and crack dealers hang out...or maybe you don't. Oh well, you're better off. So I'm confused here, checking out this record, I thought Billiams of the GUILTY PLEASURES fame played drums for these boys, yet he doesn't have credit. What the hell do I know anyway, way out here in SF… outta the Chi-town loop I tell ya (literally). As far as the record review, this is great. Total lo-fi self-destructive rock 'n'roll massacre… as they say "misery loves company" and the BASEBALL FURIES have taken a chair at my table providing me with a soundtrack fitting for my dog shit of a day. Fans of the VALENTINE KILLERS, early NEW BOMB TURKS, BANTAM ROOSTER, or TEENGENERATE should buy this today. (AS)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195)

BEYOND DESCRIPTION/KONTROVERS - split EP

BEYOND DESCRIPTION, from Japan, play straight forward energetic hardcore that, in some strange way, reminds me of YOUTH OF TODAY minus the cheesy jock aspect of sXe hardcore. It's good American-influenced Japanese hardcore that manages to avoid the cookie cutter thrash revival sound. On the flip side, KONTROVERS play six songs of thundering hardcore that, if they sped it up and added a little more "gloom," could pass for HIS HERO IS GONE out takes or demo tracks. Both sides were recorded in '99. This is a nice split from two international DIY hardcore bands. (VH)
(CAF, Strandvallen 138d, 302 57 Halmstad, SWEDEN)

THE BLACK KEYS - "The Big Come Up" LP

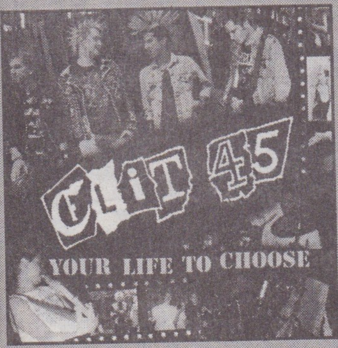
Bluesy guitar/drums duo, more straightforward than the BASSHOLES (despite a cover of "No Fun," liner notes name-checking CAPTAIN BEEFHEART and some misc. trippiness). Nice production job and even some decent songs, but this schtick has to be pretty damn good to transcend the "fine if I heard it in a bar" level (speaking of which, do whatever you must to view the video *Low Down Dirty Dogs*). The vocals don't really work on the bluesier songs (can't help but be reminded of the 300 better blues singers already recorded), but they're fine on the funkier "The Breaks" (best song on the LP—get that Moog bass in there full time is my advice). (DD)
(Alive, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510, alive-totalenergy.com)

BLAME LUKE - "Your Mom Doesn't Work Here" EP

The silk-screened cover of Homer Simpson playing guitar on the cover gets my approval right off the bat. The music is pretty basic, but doesn't come off as sophomoric. Fast hardcore/punk played with a slight modern straight edge influence. Early FIELDS OF FIRE and NO REPLY come to mind. I can appreciate the quote in the outro of the lyric booklet that says "We'll keep stealing your riffs to make better songs." This is good. (CC)
(www.grekenrecords.com)

BLIND PIGS - "Sussewut" LP

Brazil's long standing punk rockers, the BLIND PIGS are out with a new piece of wax. When listening to this record I can't help but picture a cross between the BOUNCING SOULS, the TEEN IDOLS, a hint of the CLASH, and add a fair does of Chicago snottiness. Overall this is an above average release, except for some pretty annoying background vocals. On a side note, while *MRR* gets a fair share of CDs from South America, this is one of the few pieces of vinyl that came in. (JF)
($15 ppd: Caixa Postal 245, Barueri-SP, 06453-970, BRAZIL)



THE BLOWTOPS - "Blackstatic" LP

Me likes. Total in -your-face savage rock 'n' roll. Total chaos, total mayhem, totally sexy, I'm in love with that crude guitar, grungy bass, and hostile blood 'n' guts vocs. It's like the CRAMPS with ten times the speed and hostility. I feel inspired I'm gonna go fuck something up.... (DL)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195, www.bigneckrecords.com)

BOOM BOOM KID - "Okey Dokey Dok" LP

These weirdos can wig-out or slather down the sweet, pretty pop sounds. They can also sing in English or Spanish! Yep, all sorts of variety on this crazy special European tour edition picture disc. There's a side note about BOOM BOOM KID and FUN PEOPLE and one in the same!?... yeah, the crazy little soft, sensitive FUN PEOPLE... pretty gosh dern good. (HM)
(Ugly, Casilla de Correo 2975, cp(1000), Correo Central, Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA, bbkidz@interorganic.com.ar, www.bbkidz.fwd.com.ar)

BOTCH - "Unifying Themes Redux" CD

BOTCH have always been one of my favorite bands playing this style of RORSCHACH-influenced metal/hardcore... bringing us to our knees with intense live shows before anyone knew who CONVERGE or DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN were. This compilation cd contains their first 7" all the way up to their split with MURDER CITY DEVILS, throwing in in comp tracks and some unreleased stuff along the way... most importantly being a cover of the B-52's song "Rock Lobster" from the *All About Friends* comp, which is one of the most ridiculously incredible covers I've ever heard. (VH)
(Excursion, PO Box 20224, Seattle, WA 98102)

BREAKDOWN - "1987 Demo" CD

Damn, it looks like BREAKDOWN'S 1987 demo has finally made it onto CD. I guess this band could be considered "O.G." within the world of hardcore, because in many ways they laid the groundwork for the classic beatdown NY sound. It should be pointed out that after this demo was originally releases three of the guys went on to form RAW DEAL which eventually became KILLING TIME and the other two guys continued under the name BREAKDOWN. BREAKDOWN has always belted out tough-as-nails hardcore with a choppy mid-tempo pace and loud, angry vocals. Their lyrics are pissed and hopeless letting you know that "anyone in my way is gonna get smashed." I have had this release on vinyl for a long time, and I am glad to see it come out again on CD. Check it out. (RC)
(Blackout, www.blackoutrecords.com)

BURMESE - "Treaties of Greed and Filth/Live War"

Two different recordings at two different speeds with two slightly different line-ups ("Live War" has an additional drummer) from this San Francisco self-destruct unit. Take all your bands' instruments and throw them down the *Exorcist* steps and presto: a Burmese song. Total lo-fi feedback blur noise destruction, with just bass, drums and severely mangled vocals. "Live War," a sheer wall of noise, supposedly contains BLACK FLAG and BRAINBOMBS covers but I'll send you a dollar if you can find em. There're apparently hordes of people out there who like this sort of thing, so if you're one of em, go for it. (EL)
(Scenester Credentials, PO Box 1275, Iowa City, IA 52240, www.scenecred.com)

BURY THE LIVING/DRAWBLANK - split EP

Fuck yes! BURY THE LIVING, from Memphis, continue to pound away in their brutal NEGATIVE APPROACH-meets-NEGATIVE FX sort of way. Totally amazing and ferocious go-for-the-fucking-throat hardcore, fucking great! DRAWBLANK play equally furious, yet less burly and more snotty hardcore punk that reminds me of early CHARLES BRONSON (before they tried to break the speed barrier) or even, at times, FYP. Best lyrics of the issue nomination for their song entitled "When Your Friends Become Cops." Just listen in: "…you can fuck off motherfucker/fuck you motherfucker/fuck you motherfucker/fuck…" Great! Limited to 300 so get cracking! (MT)
(Hell On Earth, 423 E. Elm St. #102, Springfield, MO 65806)

C.F.D.L. - "Punk Will Never Die! Live in Japan 1993"

I consider myself lucky, as I got to see CRAZY FUCKED UP DAILY LIFE in Nagoya several years ago. Call them "fastcore," "thrash," or whatever you like, but C.F.D.L. defy categorization, they are among the most insanely energetic bands ever, and this record captures them at their finest...12 songs of no-slow, all-go hardcore. The recording leaves a bit to be desired, but after the first song you forget about that and just marvel at a hardcore band playing to near perfection. Loads of hits here, like "Religion Make Unhappy," "Racism Suck," "Song For Crusty" (we're punx, not crusty!), and "Tofu Song," along with a discography or C.F.D.L. releases from the SPAZZ split to the DENIAL split, and all the splits in between. An often overlooked band, and I wish this release (or better yet a discography disc, hint hint) was more widely available...I think this was booted by someone in the US, but who knows really, grab one if you can. (WN)
(no address)

CALIGARI - CD

One of the few bands I've heard lately breathing fresh air into the metalcore genre, CALIGARI (from fucking South Dakota—wow), is a strange and pleasantly frustrating band to describe. Actually the more I listen to this, the more it's fully kicking my ass. CALIGARI incorporate some really cool darker, slower, quieter dynamics into the usual metal chugging, but without ever being boring or losing the song, like maybe a mix of CATHARSIS, IRE, and CAVE IN before they started sucking ass. In fact, they have some damn interesting and unique songs. Lots of guitar (and vocal) effects used in a tasteful manner that bring to mind BOTCH, and some occasional DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN technicalities, but not overbearingly or annoyingly so. Help these guys out- cuz if they can ever make it the hell out of South Dakota (poor guys), they could be big. (EL)
(Init, PO Box 34342, Mankato, MN 56002)

CARDIA - "Peace & Anarchy" EP

Mid-paced German hardcore punk, raw guitars and gruff vocals—like DOOM but not as crushing. You can almost see the mohawks a-flop'n and the punx mixing it up on the dance floor. I'd be back by the bar drinking soda. (MT)
(Cardia, Staffelsweg 19/56743, Mendig 02652/51550, GERMANY)

CARRION - "Beggar/Witness Your Birth"

Their label describes them as stoner metal, which, while accurate, only describes one facet of what CARRION does. There are traces of math rock and hardcore in here too. The music has a complexity that I doubt a bunch of permanently stoned longhairs (what I picture when I hear the phrase stoner rock) could pull off. Think very late period BLACK FLAG. It does get noodley from time to time but each part is pretty short, so if you don't like what's going

on, give it a second, because a punk part probably looms at the next chorus. This is metal that I can actually get into. (AM)
(McCarthyism, 7209 25th Ave, Hyattsville, MD 20783-2752, info@mccarthyism.org)

CAVE MEN/INSANE YOUTH A.D. - "Reason of Dishonor" split LP
CAVE MEN from Japan play thick, down-tuned dirge-core with flashes of metal tinged guitar leads here and there. The singer sounds like he's got some effects on his voice (compression?). They sound like they would be devastating live. INSANE YOUTH A.D. on the other side, and also from Japan, picked up the tempo a bit more but, for some reason, didn't do that much for me at this moment. Hardcore with a rock edge. Fans of FORWARD, JUDGEMENT, and NIGHTMARE would be into them. (WM)
(Dan-Doh, "K-Club" Honmachi 2-1-26, Kochi City, 780-0870, Japan)

CHEATER SLICKS - "Yer Last Record" CD
They of a million records and million emptied clubs. I've seen the CHEATER SLICKS a few times live, and their jamming-blues punk style has always conflicted with the needs of the five-drinks-gone twitching antennae that populate shows in this town. Theirs is not music-to-hit-on-chicks by. It takes some attention and a desire on the part of the listener to get into the mood and intensity displayed by a band that is taking pleasure is its noise for its own sake. If that sound like a rationale for jazz-like snobbery, oh well, I don't make any rules around here. The CHEATER SLICKS are a great band who deserve your *attention*. (RW)
(In the Red, 1118 W. Magnolia Bl., PO Box #208, Burbank, CA 91506)

CIRIL - "Six Tales" EP
Wow, this is what the LIL' BUNNIES would sound like if they could play their instruments and write lyrics about something besides hopping and eating carrots. Really. CIRIL songs are very short, with repetitive vocals sounding eerily similar to Vulvateen Bunny. CIRIL are sloppy hardcore with a message that I'm loving so much recently, like the YOUNG ONES and ARMED WITH INTELLIGENCE. (DP)
(Perplexing, PO Box 15443, Long Beach, CA 90815)

THE CLASH - "Riot Control!" LP
.....strange collection of live cuts, demos, and Joe Strummer's front teeth..... sound quality is mostly pretty nice considering this is a "for-fans-only" gig here.....total bootleg fever these days.....and why not.......!!!!! Especially if it's a heavy like the CLASH......the CLASH were well loved in their day.....especially by the girls....!!! ... just think of how many young punk rock girlies there were humping the bed post to photos of Mick Jones and his skinny ass in the pages of *Creem* magazine......Boy howdy!!!!!!! ....these rubber-faced tea balls were SEX SYMBALS!!!!!!!! ..... just ask your mom.....maybe she'll show you her "Topper" tattoo just above her butthole....scratch and sniff.....!!!! .....here's mud in your eye sonny boy!!!!! .... yes, I'll have to agree with Eddy Budds in the long run....the CLASH were the first to mix sex appeal with politics.......I mean who wouldn't want to suck the cock of an intelligent man???? (SW)
(no address)

CLASH DOGS - "Bite the System" EP
Lets say you beat the shit out of Captain Sensible and made him stop being such a poseur. Then he told the rest of his band mates the mistakes they have been making—they listened to him and the DAMNED became a punk band again. This is what they would sound like. Rolling, fist-waving, vaguely musically beautiful punk. This is fun. (JA)
(Bronze Fist, 5-2-104-203, Higashi, Toyonaka, Toyonaka-City, Osaka, JAPAN)

CLIT 45 - "Your Life to Choose" EP
Young mohawked kids from Long Beach, California sing about being outcasts. (SR)
(Punkcore, PO Box 916, Middle Island, New York, 11953)

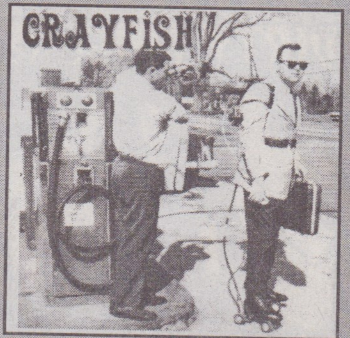
COCKNOOSE-"Badmen, Butchers, and Bleeders" LP
I hope they is funnin'. It is kinda like gangsta rap, except they are white trash punks (?). The music is supposed to be stoner rock, but is really just slowed down '77 style punk rockin' fuck. Plenty of offensive (to everyone) lyrics and American imagery. Why do all southern-fried bands wear NEUROSIS t-shirts? (JA)
(TKO, 3216 W.Cary St., #303, Richmond, VA 23221)

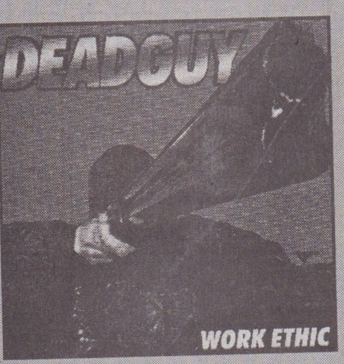
STUD COLE - "The Witch/ Burn Baby Burn"
Thanks to Norton for introducing me to another great artist, STUD COLE, the California transplant from Buffalo, NY. On this single are his first, "The Witch" from 1964, and last, "Burn Baby Burn" from 1968, recordings. These tracks are evil. Slow, prodding, menacing and catchy. I could listen to this all day. I'll have to get myself a copy of the LP. (CK)
(Norton, PO Box 646, Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276)

COLOR CACAS - "Color Cacas" 10"
I'm glad that the enclosed press release mentions that COLOR CACAS "make a Psychedelic-Grunge," because now I don't have to be concerned that they'd be pissed off by my tagging them thusly. Not psychedelic in the MAD RIVER way, but in the 90s neo-psych rawk way, and grunge in the...well, the grunge way. A bit ponderous for my taste, to say the least, but fans of...well, of Psychedelic-Grunge should be pleased. (DD)
(Swamp Room, PO Box 5663, 30056 Hanover, GERMANY, www.swamp-room.de)

COMMON INTEREST - "As We Decay..." EP
Kids from Connecticut take early 90s American-style sXe hardcore and throw it into the urine-soaked gutters of crust punk, adding blast beats, high pitched screams, and politically charged lyrics to make up this five song EP. They don't exactly pull it off to perfection, but their attempt an ANTISCHISM style mix of crust and hardcore is worth a listen. (VH)
(Room101, PO Box 1004, Windsor, CT 06095)

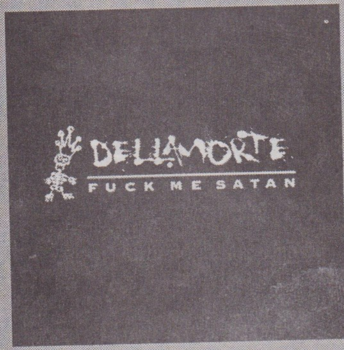
CONTRA LA CONTRA - "Anti-State Anti-Fascist Anti-Capitalist" LP
This record is really good. CONTRA LA CONTRA plays faster straightforward punk rock, with a rough recording that complements them well. What I like best about their sound is the vocals. They are shared between a girl (who handles most of the vocals) and a few other guys, all with awesome voices who keep the party going. I had a hard time reading the lyrics without kind of laughing to myself, just because they didn't translate very well into English, leaving us with lines like "If you consider yourself somehow better, then you're a dick with a complex!" The ideas are all there, though. Although there was a little more pixelation than I like to see, the layout was nice and simple and worked really well. Good record. (WR)
(Alerta Antifascista, PO Box 2318, 24913 Flensburg, GERMANY)





THE CONTROL - "The Forgotten" EP
Four songs of well-written fast hardcore with raspy, spitted vocals. The production and the guitar writing have a modern twist similar to that of BREATHE IN. With the exception of my favorite track "Head and Shoulders", the lyrics are predominantly introspective. There is a song about suicide titled "To My Love," and another song containing the line "the winter's coming on/the winter's in my heart." While I am sure these lyrics are very cathartic for some, personally I couldn't find them more boring and tiresome. You want to hear a guy pour his heart out over pissed-off hardcore? Listen to JUDGE. (CC)
(Go Kart, PO Box 20, Prince Street Station, New York, NY 10012)

THE COOLJERKS - "Cleaned a Lot Plates In Memphis" LP
Sassy, strut-o-rama, bluesy garage rock from city where Elvis died on a toilet while eating a big 'ol taco…er something like that. Seems like the real deal Holyfield shit—and not some Johnny come lately "I used to be über-emo" hipster garbage. Well done for the style, but still no REATARDS, and COPOUT is still my favorite Memphis band ever. (MT)
(Sympathy, www.sympathyrecords.com)



CRAYFISH - "Crayfish" CD
An eight-song disc from this Italian hardcore band. Very NYHC influenced, both in the good early CRO-MAGS, AGNOSTIC FRONT way, and the bad 25 TA LIFE way. Lyrics in Italian, but with songs like "Bonehead," and "SxE Decission," I figure we all get the idea. The better parts of the disc are great hardcore; fast, aggressive and in your face, with buzzsaw guitars and rapid fire drums, but too often CRAYFISH descend into all that tough-guy hip hop nonsense. Fuck, I HATE that shit, it can kill a song faster than stupid ex-girlfriend lyrics ("Apariencia" is a case in point, the best song on the disc until the last ten seconds, then they start funking it up, making me forget how much I loved the rest of the song). But the good parts are fucking good, and the release is more than worth your while. (WN)
(Invisible, C/ San Roque 44+3*, 03600 Elda (Alicante), ITALY)

CRESS - "The Greed Machine and the Money Tree" 2xLP
CRESS is an absolutely brilliant combination of the some of the finer points of CONFLICT, CRASS, and even some elements of early KILLING JOKE. This double LP serves as a discography of sorts, combining their *Monuments* LP, with the split 10" with DOOM, the *From Violence to Consumerism EP* and a pile of unreleased tracks (including a cover of the CRASS song "Big A, Little A"). Ominous, dark and moody yet driving anarcho-punk, with those ranting Englishman vocals which are almost a requirement for the style. Excellent. (MT)
(Skuld, Malmsheimerstr 14, 71272 Renningen, GERMANY)

CRIMSON SWEET - "Livin' in Strut" CD
You know how LE TIGRE say "fag," but they aren't actually homophobic? That may be what is going on here. It's not like every other word is "fag," but they call someone a "pansy" and a "fruit." If it's not ironic, fuck you, you backward fucks. If so, I'm free to say that this is pretty rad. Really simple four-on-the-floor beats, with slightly raspy female vocals (think Chrissie Hynde) add up to some rocking fun. And, as always, "whoo" back-up vocals get major bonus points. (MX)
(On/On Switch, www.ononswitch.com)

CRUDE B.E./ALLEE DER KOSMONAUTEN - split 10"
Cool split of German metal/hardcore here. ALLEE DER KOSMONAUTEN are doing the epic mid-pace metal thing with morose minor key melodies in kind of a URANUS/ONE EYED GOD PROPHECY vein. They mix things up enough to keep this pretty interesting and at faster moments even reminded me a bit of TRAGEDY. CRUDE B.E., who I believe have at least one member of the mighty Y in their ranks, will rip you a new poopshute with their insane thrashy hardcore/grind—always just sick fast full-throttle pummeling, with great (brief) breakdowns. These dudes are *pissed*. Quite a powerful split over all. (EL)
(Thought Crime, Boxhagener Str.23, 10245 Berlin, GERMANY, thoughtcrime@berlin.sireco.net)

CRUEL & UNUSUAL - "Killtime" CD
Not sure where these guys are from, I think it's either Southern California or Texas, somewhere sunny anyway. Solid gnarly punk rock that reminds me of the SMUT PEDDLERS with a rockier edge, in fact when they slow it down it sounds like evil honky-tonk, nice. They do a cover of the BEATLES' "Run for Your life" and the title track may or may not be a SHANE McGOWAN song, but don't quote me on it. This is good shit, I'm sure they'd kick ass. (AD)
(Mortville, PO Box 4263 Austin, TX 78765)

THE CYBERMEN - "Cybernetic Surgery" EP
Cybernetic Surgery is what appears to be a high-quality bootleg of this band's 1978 EP, and boasts a kind of droll wit and poppy new wave chops ("which were the style at the time"). Lotta that kind of thing about this month, if you've not noticed. I've got a scratched RADIATORS FROM SPACE 45 at the bottom on my laundry basket that sounds quite similar. "Where's the New Wave?" ("where's the new wave, where's the new wave now?") is a swell tune, and the title track successfully grafts science-fictional lyrics to boppy beat 'n' roll. Boss. "I Can't Help It" is a weedy ballad that picks up its pace later on: not soon enough to save it. (JH)
(no address)

DOA - "Win the Battle" LP
America gets itself into another war, hockey season started last night—it must be time for a new DOA LP! I love DOA, always have, always will (then again, big guys *do* like DOA). Sure, they lost the plot a bit back in the late 80s/early 90s, but didn't everyone? No, to be honest, they have released some crap, but they never (really) sold out and never did the break up/reform thing, and remain one of the best bands ever, based solely on those first four records. *Win the Battle* sees DOA return to the territory they know best: rockin' tough political punk with balls and a sense of humor. The usual subjects bear the brunt of Joey Shithead's wrath—warmongers, rednecks, and politicians. There's also a cool song about the WTO ("Just Say NO To The WTO") and a nice song that pays tribute to their late drummer Dimwit ("Junk City Nowhere [Vancouver]"), as well as a slew of beer-related songs. The blues version of "Fuck You" is also quaint. Love DOA or not, it's good to see that you can count on some things these days, I hope they come through town again soon. (They also get special points for thanking the mighty Oakland Raiders.) (AD)
(Sudden Death, Moscrop PO Box 43001, Burnaby, BC, V5G 3HO CANADA)

DRI - "1983-1985" LP
The title of this bootleg says it all. This is a comprehensive 46-song introduction to one the greatest hardcore/thrash bands *before* they learned how to play their instruments. Save yourself from shelling out hundreds of dollars for the first EP, and instead get this moderately priced LP which contains all the songs from *both* EPs and most of the first LP. Q: How can you go wrong with a band that in 1983 released an EP with 22 songs on it? A: It's a rhetorical question jackass. You should already own this. (CC)
(no address)

DEAD BOYS - "Liver Than You'll Ever Be" 2xLP

The DEAD BOYS were one of the greatest US punk bands. Period. If you don't agree with me then you are wrong and may the Lord have mercy on your soul. This is a double LP (drool!) of their 1987 reunion show. Now after looking at the photos of Stiv in the gatefold (way more fem than anything the DOLLS ever were—remember when Cher did that video on that Navy ship? Well I think Stiv was wearing the same get up) I thought this was going to suck a llama's ass, but its a great set list and the sound quality is decent—though I could do with out some of the crowd noise. Magnum isn't on this so there is no bass but the rest of the boys serve it up right. A portion of the hauntingly eerie lyrics of "Ain't It Fun" next to Stiv's photo give a little eulogy. My only real complaint is that "I Won't Look Back" (my favorite DEAD BOYS tune) sounds like shit. If I were at this show I probably would have left after that song. (BM)
(Get Back, via Taretina, 25-50069 Sieci (Firenze), ITALY, www.abraxas.it)

DEADGUY - "Work Ethic" CD

In their day, DEADGUY played some of the most brutal and chaotic metal/hardcore there was, period. Not to mention, were one of the only good bands to ever grace the name Victory Records. This six song CD on Blackout Records is a re-release from 1994 isn't my favorite release the band did but, it's still some brutal shit. (VH)
(Blackout, 931 Madison St., Hoboken, NJ 07030)

DELLAMORTE - "Fuck Me Satan" EP

Swedish metallic hardcore in the vein of ENTOMBED or AT THE GATES (oh, wait, those are metal bands, aren't they?). Originally released in 2000, this re-release is limited to 666 copies (ooohhh, how evil) and contains four fantastic songs that prove once again that no one plays hate filled hardcore quite like the Swedes...must be the long winters. Gut wrenching screams and guitar solos, you know you love it. (WN)
(Pas-83, Box 550 02, Jonkoping, SWEDEN)

DEMOLITION - "Darkness Filled My Soul" LP

Driving MOTÖRHEAD styled punk rock from Japan. The heavy, quick paced riffing combined with the snarled GISM-esque vocals sort of reminds me a bit of FORWARD. Solid. (MT)
(Answer)

DENAK/GORED FACE - split EP

Straight up grind split here. DENAK, from Spain, are the more well-known of the two and deliver five songs, of fast, raw, bass-heavy grind. Pretty much same as they've always been, so if you liked 'em before you'll like this. I think it's pretty generic—they're not really bringing anything new to the table. GORED FACE, from L.A., aren't either, but they're a lot more fun. They traffic in the total *Reek*-era CARCASS gore-grind fare—mangled baby corpse photos and all. Totally insane vomited vocals, gurgling lows and cackled highs and manic lo-fi guitar destruction. Fans of SQUASH BOWELS, HAEMMORHAGE, WASTEOID and DISGORGE will go apeshit over this. (EL)
(Nuclear BBQ Party, c/o Jorge Lopez, 3816 E. Dozier St., Los Angeles, CA, 90063)

DESPITE - "The Last Breath of a Dying Race" EP

Seven more tracks of brutal, skullcrushing, down-tuned, Midwestern hardcore—heavily inspired by the likes of our friends from Sweden. Burly as fuck, just like the people from the land of beer and cheese—Wisconsin. Fuck yes! (MT)
(Skit, 142 Whiting Ln, West Hartford, CT 06119, skitrecords@hotmail.com)

DIGGER – "Keystone" CD

No longer a good WESTON sound-a-like/spinoff, this is good pop punk with some catchy guitar parts and breaks. A little bit of that Vagrant sound. Stronger than their last full length. A good release. (RL)
(Hopeless, PO Box 7495, Van Nuys, CA 91409, www.diggerpa.com)

DIRTY FINGERS- EP

In the spirit of the CANDY SNATCHERS, comes the DIRTY FINGERS with their sleazy brand of rock 'n' roll. These four pervs prove that boys still start rock bands to get pussy. Good luck, guys. (DL)
(Black Lung, no address)

DISARM/H.407 - split EP

DISARM knock your ears off with a couple of tracks of blistering grind and crust. The vocals range from volatile screams to throaty growls.. H.407 hold down their side down of the split with some thundering rapid fire crust with an edge of metal and deep growling vocals. Solid effort from both bands. (RC)
(Tetanus, c/o Borvs Catelani, Loc. Capannelle, 55029 Castelvecchio Pascoli (LU) ITALY; tetanus.cjb.net)

DISGRUNTLED NATION - "Small Town, Smaller Minds" EP

Wild subterranean noise (being literally-minded types, it was all recorded in a basement). The DISGRUNTLED NATION are raw-boned hardcore suffused with a Reagan Era "loot the 7-11 because bombing commences in five minutes" feel...they're more interested in making the loudest noise with the fewest possible notes, and aren't engaged in a life-or-death struggle to break the North American Land Speed record. Grainy, simple, and as easily understood as a black-and-white photocopy. Kills."White Wash" and "Already Dead" rule. (JH)
(Poisoned Candy, PO Box 9263, Missoula, MT, anxxxiety@hotmail.com)

THE DONS - "Gunsmoke" EP

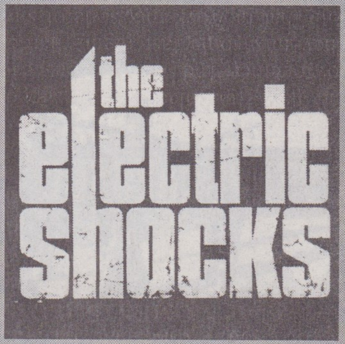
This band seems particularly proud for not using any fancy recording equipment for this release, so I guess we should keep that in mind when listening. This drunk, sloppy, droolish, probably smelly, and sleazy country/rock doesn't really do anything for me. (MM)
(Vince Combardy Highschool, Schanzenstr. 69 20357 Hamburg, GERMANY

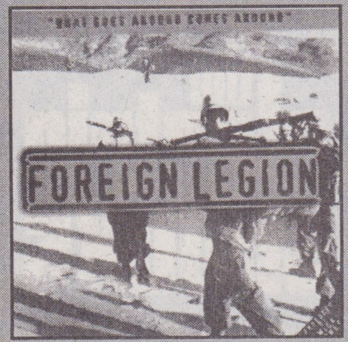
DYNAMITE BOY - "Devoted" CDEP

DYNAMITE BOY, wherefore art thou? You used to be such a decent melodic-punk band, and then you made the same record four times, and everyone (i.e. me) stopped caring. Evolve, dammit! That aside, this would be pretty putrid even if I didn't once like the band. This honestly has some of the worst lyrics I have ever heard, and they do that god damn fast-cover-of-an-80s-pop-hit thing that annoys the fuck out of me. Barf. (MX)
(Offtime, P.O. Box 479176, Chicago, IL 60647, www.offtime.com)

EDEN MAINE - "The Treachery Pact" CD

Reeeeaaally wasn't into this CD at all. They look like cute young British blokes on their website, so I wanted to say something nice, but there's little to recommend here. They're doing the "lets put really bad clean singing and





melodic parts over mediocre metalcore riffs" thing like HIMSA, KILLSWITCH ENGAGE, DROWNING MAN, and countless others, which is just never a good idea and one which I wish would die as a musical concept altogether. Ok, their drummer's really good. There's something positive. (EL)
(Ignition, 1 Chandos Rd., Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN1 2NY, U.K., www.ignitiononline.co.uk)

THE ELECTRIC SHOCKS - "Baby What's You Plan" CD
I can't decide what to make of this one. On one hand I like the garagey-HEADCOATS-type music mixed with the whiny, warbly, lethargic punky vocals. On the other the songs are too slow. Plus it's so weird to see a three song CD. I have a feeling this one needs many more listens so I'll get work on it. (CK)
(Vinyl Japan UK, 98 Camden Rd., London, NW1 9EA, England, office@vinyljapan.com)

ELEPHANT MAN - "Big D's Banana Hammock" EP
ELEPHANT MAN is a local band that contains some personnel from CAPITALIST CASUALTIES and PLUTOCRACY. They pound their way through some mid-tempo grinding hardcore that chugs and jolts around with a lot of brute force and power. There are even a few hints of fast grind to be found. The vocalist Daisuke has a harsh throat shredding scream that complements the music well. They even throw in a BLACK FLAG cover. Check it out! (RC)
(Impatience or Indifference, 3201 3rd St., 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94124, www.ioirecords.com)

EMPI/BILLY BOY E LA SUA BANDA - split CD
This appears to be a split between two skinhead bands, EMPI from Japan, and BILLY BOY E LA SUA BANDA from Italy. EMPI play very gruff slow Oi! with lyrics about those skinhead staples—alienation and national pride. Lots of football crowd choruses. BILLY BOY E LA SUA BANDA are a lot faster but just as gruff, plenty of backings here too. Not bad. (AD)
(Brutus, Via Stevani 5, 29100 Piacenza, ITALY)

EX-CATHEDRA - "2x4=" LP
EX-CATHEDRA seem to be trying to fuse punk and ska the way OP IVY did so many years ago. They even have their own little skanking man on the record sleeve. I am not a fan of punk/ska (except OP IVY), so I am not a huge fan of this record. The lyrics are politically oriented and thoughtful, but the musical style just does not interest me. I'm sure that fans of ska will like it, though. (DP)
(Campary, PO Box 23271, London SE14 6XB, UK, www.ex-cathedra.co.uk)

EXCESSIVES - CD
These Hawaiian shirt wearing Canadians would not win any street punk fashion contest, but they hold their own musically. With vocals sometimes reminiscent of ANTI NOWHERE LEAGUE and chunky guitar hooks and leads straight out of the 70s, the EXCESSIVES have succeeded in making me listen to the entire CD. (DP)
(Long Shot, 726 Richards St, Vancouver, BC V6B 3A4, CANADA, www.longshotmusic.com)

THE FALL - "Live at the Witch Trials" LP
More obsessive-compulsive behavior from the original 24 Hour Party People—will this reissue of the FALL's debut LP fall into the wrong hands? Haven't they done *enough* already? *Live at the Witch Trials* was and is prickly, dangerous, and a difficult kick for those who like easy answers and catchy songs about girls (or cars). The early FALL were, like ALTERNATIVE TV, METAL URBAIN, or SWELL MAPS, a band that used the basic elements of punk rock to craft something "unique" without losing the its gut-level energy or power to annoy. *Live at the Witch Trials* starts off slow and deliberate with "Frightened," picks up velocity with "Rebellious Jukebox," and "No X-Mas for John Quays." Marc E. Smith's hyper-verbose lyrics are already in place, and the band backs his rants with real anxious conviction. Brilliant and groundbreaking in the same way the first MIDDLE CLASS EP was groundbreaking. Remember: when and if one decides to "get inta" a band who put out a lot of records, start with the *old* stuff first.. (JH)
(Turning Point c/o Abraxas srl, via Arentina 25, 50069 Sieci (Firenze), ITALY, www.abraxas.net)

FIFTH HOUR HERO/GUNMOLL- split LP
This record kicks major league ass. FIFTH HOUR HERO are like a more emo, less pop, DISCOUNT. As a major DISCOUNT fan this is a major plus. As for GUNMOLL, what can I say? Their first LP hasn't dropped out of my consistent playing rotation since I got it so many months ago. Not as LEATHERFACE on these songs (though the influence is still apparent), the songs still carry some major kick. Another addition to the argument that No Idea is possibly the best label in America today. (JF)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604)

FILMMAKER - "An Invitation to an Accident" CD
When I saw the cover, I thought MILEMARKER had been deemed punk enough to be reviewed again, but alas, it is not so. I think I've got this stuff down to a formula: "fast songs" consist of mid-tempo pop-punk verse, followed by emotive breakdown chorus; "mid-tempo songs" are entirely breakdowns; and finally, "slow songs" must be over six minutes long. Go forth and divide. To be fair, "My Black Lung" is actually a good growing-up kind of song, but other than that it's just fat waiting to be trimmed. (MX)
(Farway, 404-1209 14 Ave SW, Calgary, Alberta, CANADA T3C OW1, farwayrecords.com)

FIND HIM AND KILL HIM/THE DREAM IS DEAD - split EP
A very solid split here with two bands both sound solid and seem (from all the work and thought that obviously went into this record) to be very committed to their convictions. THE DREAM IS DEAD—anger to the extreme. Heavy riffs and these vocals that just *kill.* Almost reminds me of a more up-tempo COALESCE. I like the FIND HIM AND KILL HIM stuff a bit more: extremely well-produced well-written angry hardcore anthems with just the right amount of everything. Its fast as fuck, tight as fuck, and just all-around good as fuck. The vocals, especially, sound completely killer and make me want to go punch through a wall. The release also comes with a pretty extensive booklet with lyrics and other thoughts from both bands. Recommended. (SP)
(Revolution Summer, www.thedreamisdead.com, www.findhimandkillhim.com)

FIVE DAY MESSIAH - "New Rock Regime" CD
Wow, this is a bit of throwback for me… sassy, yet totally rocking punk rock from Colorado. An excellent combo of I-SPY with the likes of ANGEL HAIR, and FORMER MEMBERS OF ALFONSIN. If this was 1994, I could totally see them at home on a show with SECOND STORY WINDOW, HEROIN, and ANTIOCH ARROW and everyone would be stoked on them. Good stuff. (MT)
(Not Bad, PO Box 2014 Arvada, CO 80001, www.notbadrecords.com)

FLAKES - "Jerk Store/Good Good Lovin'"

Another retro 2 song slap to the face from our favourite Bay Area mop tops. Total 60s worship pinching bump and swagger from the likes of the SONICS, REMAINS, SHADOWS OF KNIGHT et al. One original, one cover and neither mess around, great full production and punk rock snarl make for a boss disc. (TB)
(Screaming Apple, Dustemichstr. 14 50939, Köln, GERMANY)

FLAKES - "First I Look at the Purse/I'm Movin' On"

The FLAKES—they're from San Francisco, boast more hair than any band West of AMERICAN HEARTBREAK, and number ex-MUMMIES and COUNT BACKWURDS members among their ranks. "First I Look at the Purse" is, I believe, the tune that kicks off their set and it's a out-and-out thriller with lotsa verve—and a cleaner sound than I've come to associate with 'em.. Perfect for enjoying the FLAKES in the sanctity of your own home, without having them tapdance on your face. (JH)
(Hate, c/o Subteranean)

THE FLESH - CD

Straight out of Japan rise the kamikaze sounds of The FLESH. Belting out totally in Japanese, I have no idea what these kids are on about. Musically they sound very late 80s hardcore with a bit of hesher in 'em. Just can't get off on it though. (DL)
(Pump Up Rock)

THE FLIP TOPS - "All Worked Up" LP

Some people don't like Rip Off Records. Some people intensely dislike Greg Lowery. Perhaps he's just misunderstood? I don't like him or dislike him or even really know him, but I do tend to share his taste in music, or at least like the stuff he chooses to put out. The FLIP TOPS are no exception. There's nothing fancy about this music. They play guitar, bass, and drums. They yell and scream and, once in a while, they sing. Without sounding like a retro band, these guys manage to capture the spirit of old school punk rock. And you can never go wrong with a hot chick in the band. (KK)
(Rip Off, 581 Maple Ave, San Bruno, CA 94066)

FOREIGN LEGION - "What Goes Around Comes Around" CD

Really mellow straight forward punk rock with male vocals. It's surprisingly pretty catchy for having uninteresting lyrics. (SR)
(DSS, PO Box 739, 4021 Linz, AUSTRIA, dss@telecom.at)

THE FORGOTTEN - "Control Me" LP

I'm in heaven. "Whoa-oh" and "hey" back-up vocals not only happen in the same songs on this record, but at exactly the same time. That plus vocals that are straight out of *The Phantom of the Opera* made me really want to like this. It's tragic that so much potential is wasted on boring, mid-tempo street punk. I don't see any vast difference between this and the other bands of this genre that I've heard. There are some noodly guitar leads, some local pride, and some really colorful hair, but not much more. (MX)
(BYO, P.O. Box 67609, Los Angeles, CA 90067, www.theforgotten.net)

FOUR – CD

Boy FOUR sure do carry a strong SCREECHING WEASEL influence on their sleeves, and on their music. What we have on this CD is 35 tracks of obnoxious, snotty, fun filled punk rock culled from eleven different releases, yes a discography. This translates into more FOUR than this reviewer wants to hear. Let me set it straight, after a good day of eating cake, this reviewer only has a 25 minute attention span, and FOUR's CD is 60 plus minutes long. (JF)
(Paco Garden, PO BOX 18455, Denver, CO 80218)

LA FRACTION- "Aussi Long Sera Le Chemin" LP

I never considered how good French punk could be, till I heard LA FRACTION. They carry the similar solid guitar parts of the GITS, and a female singer who sounds really pissed and romantic at the same time, you know, singing punk in French and all. (MM)
(Skuld Releases, Malmshelmerstr. 14, 71272 Renningen, GERMANY)

FUN 4 - "Singing In The Showers" EP

........what's this????? ....is this one of them old-school punk re-issue things or is it some new band that can ape the old days to a "T"......????? ....there just so happens to be noooooooo info as usual...... which means it might be a boot....or a re-ish.... or just a lovely photograph of your father's hairy vagina and firm butter yummies.....but whatever this shit is it's the type of scum I like to stick my fingers in....... the golden years of punk rock..... like thick ropelike bands of jiz.....dangling above your mouth.... (SW)
(no address)

GBH - "Ha Ha" LP

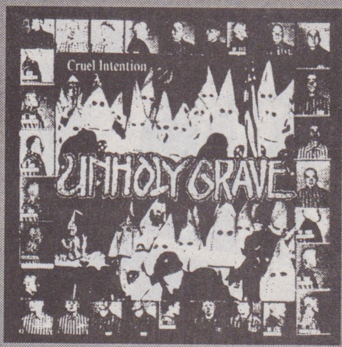
GBH was formed in the heady days of 1979 in Birmingham, England. These guys took lessons from the SEX PISTOLS and the DAMNED and mixed in a hardcore metal edge. The 1980 eight-song EP, *Leather, Bristles, Studs and Acne*, influenced many a young punk band. The 1982 LP *City Baby Attacked by Rats* continued the ascent of this great punk band. The 1983 follow-up LP *City Baby's Revenge*. blistered many a neophyte punk's ears. After 22 years on the road, three original members offer *Ha Ha*. If you heard this LP performed by a new punk band, you might give it a thumbs up. From punk legends like GBH, it is somewhat generic sounding. These guys still rip it up live, but this LP is not essential. (BR)
(Go Kart Records, PO Box 20, Prince Street Station, New York, NY 110112, artie@gokartrecords.com)

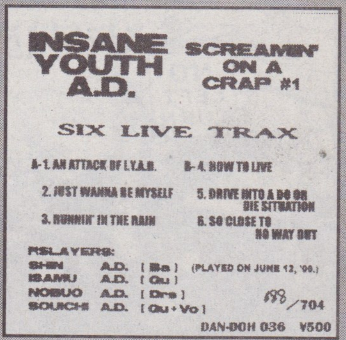
THE GANGBANGS - "When All Turns to Shit" EP

......heavy over-drive noise with no production value at all.....sounds like the bands of '95.....smell your fingers after listening to this one....if they smell like shit then that should tell you something.... if they smell like fish then that means you might have had them up in your mom this whole time and didn't know it..... that's exactly how I feel about this record right now....... (SW)
(High School Refuse, Beragweg 12, 9791 LN Groningen, NETHERLANDS, ktvs@yahoo.com)

GODDAMN GENTLEMEN - "Sex-Caliber Horse Power" LP

Portland organ tickling, saxophone blowing, garage rock. I'm gonna have to admit that I'm not a fan of saxophones, and this band uses them. Remember a band called the SLAMMIN' WATUSIS, they used em ...and well, they were bad. I'm not gonna put these guys in that category, it's just an example of why saxophones are bad in punk music. This is LP sounds like the MURDER CITY DEVILS (lyrics like "little girl" and "broken bottles"), and watered down





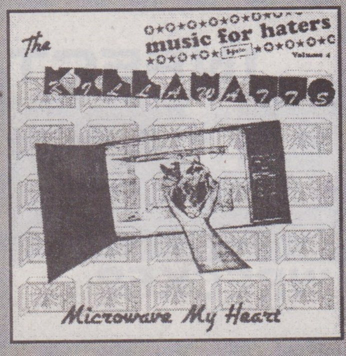
BANTAM ROOSTER (distorted vocals, bluesy rock riffs) blended together ...with a saxophone. On a scale of 1-10, this is a six. (AS).
(Uppercut, 4470 Sunset Blvd. #195, Los Angeles, CA. 90027, www.uppercutrecords.com)

GODSTOMPER/WUZOR - split EP

For the two young gents that are GODSTOMPER, life began and ended the day NAPALM DEATH recorded *Scum* some fifteen years ago—not that I'd disagree with them. Perfecting the art of recording with all the finesse of a lone microphone in the middle of the practice room floor, the Bay Area's GODSTOMPER have put out countless noisy lo-fi guitar-less grind releases, that unfortunately never do justice to their phenomenally pummelling live shows. I'm sure that's the point, but if they ever decide to do a real mix, they'll level lesser bands in a minute. WUZOR, from Eureka, CA—walk the sludgly slow-core trip, though when they speed things up they fucking shred too. Big slow apocalyptic riffing ala NEUROSIS eventually crescendo into some serious grind parts. For fans of GRIEF, ISIS, IRE, WELLINGTON, DYSTOPIA and the like. (EL)
(Wolfman, 4301 Horner St., Union City, CA 94587, wolfman@totaldeath.com)

THE GOODS- "Saving Sanity" CD

Without the glitter and eyeliner, this band really reminds me of the LUNACHICKS. Thick guitar with driving vocals. Yep. (MM)
(New High, PO Box 1070 Hermosa Beach, CA 90254)

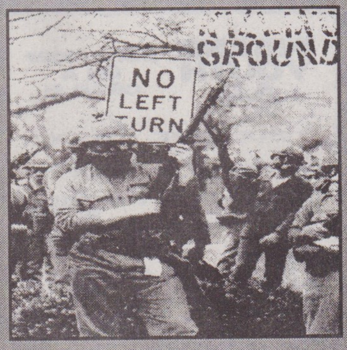


GRIDE/COCKROACH - split EP

GRIDE has been one of the best and most sadly underrated grind bands since their split LP w/ fellow Czechs, MRTVA BUDOUCNOST. Silent for a while, this split sees them continuing in the same style as that on their recent *Happy Birthday...* 7", that being a bizarre and truly original mixture of almost-HIS HERO IS GONE-style melodies within the most blazing grind you've ever heard. Their drummer is seriously off the hook with some of the fastest blasts and double kick around. Great multiple shouted vocals that are upfront in the mix too, with oddly borderline emo-esque lyrics, sung in Czech. GRIDE are still definitely more on the hardcore side of the grind fence—they just happen to have a drummer who could flay any metal drummer alive. COCKROACH, from Holland, are much more straight-forward raw fast screamy hardcore, but frankly after multiple listens, remain fairly unremarkable. Comes with stickers of both bands. Absolutely essential for grind heads and a great starting point for those curious about finding something to like in grind. (EL)
(K.A.Z., Rado Uhlik, J. Banika 23, 96001 Zvolen, SLOVAK REPUBLIC, uhlik.radoslav@orange.sk)

HIDE AND GO FREAK - "It's My Party and I'll Kill If I Want To" EP

Great use of the synth/drum machine in a sloppy punk rock idiom. Guitars are tinny and trashy, the vocals/lyrics hold up when you can make 'em out and overall the feeling of impending implosion is amusing and compelling. One of the songs is too long, but the rest are great little party-puke faves. Stick to singles, kids, this stuff would not hold up for 15 tracks at the current level of ambition. Punkish! (RW)
(Petset, try Interpunk.com)



THE HIGH BEAMS - "Hallucination" LP

I didn't have high expectations for an LP titled *Hallucination*. I feared that the pop influence might be too much for me. I'm halfway through the first track and I'm relatively certain that I'm not going to be able to go the distance. They're actually "singing." That just doesn't really work in punk rock. And the lead guitar...stop it, this is not heavy metal. I don't know what to make of this. It's college rock, college pop, over-produced. Stop it now. (KK)
(Dead Beat, PO Box 283, Los Angeles, CA 90078)

HILJAINEN KEVAT - "Raippatanhut" CD

When about to review this, I couldn't ignore the cover art that made me think "lame jam band with Photoshop and a CD burner wants to get signed to a major..." I was hesitant. Listening to the guitar lead on the first song that sounded like "Dueling Banjos" made me wonder if I'd be able to get a dollar in trade at my local used record store. But before I had time to blink, I was assaulted with fast Finnish hardcore that combined the intensity of KANSAS UUTISET with the vocals and song structure of LAMA. A Trojan horse of Finnish hardcore, if that makes any sense. Damn. (VH)
(Hiljainen Kevat, Pappilanniementie 13 A 7, 42700 Keuruu, FINLAND)

HORRORCOMIC - "I Don't Mind/England '77"

Very useful bootleg of the best rock-critic-led punk band of the original wave—besides the SNIVELLING SHITS. Both sides of this record are stone classic 1977-'78 punk rock with great production. On the very useful Lightning label. The recent trend of booting just the good EPs saves valuable time versus picking thru 70's comps that are 75% filler. Good trend, eh wot? Buy this, and the FUN 4 and XPRESS 7" too. (RW)
(no address)

THE INDEX/UNHOLY GRAVE - split EP

Ugly grind/hardcore with not a little death metal influence from Virginia's INDEX, the new band from Richard of ENEMY SOIL. I heard they've since changed their name, but I'm not sure to what. There's a lot of different influences here: you've got double kick and blasts from the drummer, though mostly solid mid-pace grooves, really evil sounding death metal guitars, and some sick-ass female vocals. Richard still chimes in with his trademark ENEMY SOIL hairball-clearing "Eww-aaackk!!" every now and then too. I thought this band fucking destroyed when they played out here last year, and these two songs do not disappoint. As for the now ubiquitous UNHOLY GRAVE, gotta say, I'm not tired of em yet, and this is some of their better material I've heard. Fucking raging stuff. The guitars and drums are going faster than your ears can keep up with. And it's super raw of course, but still pretty damn heavy. Great packaging too with blue marble vinyl and a gatefold sleeve makes this a pretty essential grind record. (EL)
(Deathstill, PO Box 633, Dagenham, RM8 3AZ, U.K., http://www.deathstill.co.uk)

INFECT/WRECKER - split CD

WRECKER, who hail from Milwaukee, are an all female rock unit who play heavy dirgy punk in the style of say KARP or the MELVINS. Well played with a very complentary raw recording. As for INFECT, fuck...simply fucking amazing hardcore punk from these Brazilian women. Musically think SEEIN' RED mixed with NO FOR AN ANSWER—harshly brilliant with lyrics spat out in Portuguese. Fucking great! Please tour here! PLEASE! (MT)
(Kill You For A Dollar, PO Box 68015, Grand Rapids, MI 49516-8015, www.killyouforadollar.com)

INSANE N' THE BRAIN - "Mizubukurenotamashii" EP

I had heard INSANE N' THE BRAIN before on 625's *Murderous Grind Attack* comp that came out close to last year, but these songs seem much different than what a I remember. There is a lot of musical experimentation and eccentricities going on between the hectic bursts of thrashy hardcore that is all too characteristic of Japanese bands

(NICE VIEW anyone?) Though a bit difficult to swallow on first listen, the songs on this record grew on me in a weird way. Worth checking out if you're curious and open minded. (SP)
(Answer, Hase Bld. No. 2 B1 5-49, Osu 3 Naka-ku, Nagoya-City, Aichi 460 JAPAN)

INSANE YOUTH A.D. - "Screamin' on a Crap #1" EP

Starting off with "An Attack of INSANE YOUTH A.D.," this six song slab displays the fury that is INSANE YOUTH A.D. at their finest. Recorded live in 2000, these tunes are pure Japanese hardcore. A good live recording, and thrash that brings to mind DSB or early JUDGMENT. Great stuff, but then with Dan-Doh, you can *never* go wrong. (WN)
(Dan-Doh, "K-Club" Honmachi 2-1-26, Kochi City, 780-0870 JAPAN)

INTELLECTUALS - "Boring Town" EP

One of those weird hybrid 60s garage/70s new wave bands that are currently wandering the clubs of our fair planet. They dress skinny-tie, but the beat is pure 60s garage; the lyrics are either timeless-transcendent or up-to-the-minute topical (no more songs about '77 and poor 'ol Sid, let alone by big bad Impala). A scene grows up on records like these. A great, uh, garage-punk EP that goes thunk-thud-snarl without any metal or indie influences. There are 250 of these, just like most of the spiffy 7"s Hate Records just put out. I think this band is Italian. So move it! (RW)
(Hate)

THE JERKS - "Get Your Woofing Dog Off Me" EP

This is one of many, many, many old punk singles being "reissued" these days. This includes the two songs on the original single and two others (that may or may not have appeared elsewhere.) I had seen this one in the local record shop and was curious. Most of those being re-pressed are pretty well known super-rarities. I had never heard of this one and wasn't sure if it was something I had missed or something that should have been missed. After listening to all four cuts, I'm still not sure. It's decent '77 punk rock, but it is definitely not crucial. It's catchy, mid-tempo, and sometimes kind of silly. I've got mixed feelings about these sort of "reissues." It's great for people to have access to the music, but I wonder where the cash is going. To the original band members? To the first one to get it re-pressed? To some recording geek who kept the original masters? I don't have the answers, but it seems like it could be a little dodgy. (KK)
(Last Year's Youth, no address)

THE KILLAWATTS - EP

The KILLAWATTS fire out the those three chords like their lives depended on it, and you really gotta admire their enthusiasm. There's no let up here, it's totally garage gone hardcore. Fun stuff. (DL)
(Hate, via Giovanni In Laterano 194 - 00184 Roma, ITALY)

KILLING GROUND/GAG ORDER - split EP

KILLING GROUND are very depressing. Something very disillusioning happened to these fellows, and it is reflected in the music. Therefore, it is fantastic! Musically, it is solid, driving punk with a beautiful hardcore tint to it. Cool. GAG ORDER are not the GAG ORDER that came from Oakland years ago. That GAG ORDER had the intelligence of Wendy O-Matik and the guitar genius of Noah Landis to create great punk. This GAG ORDER has nothing going for it. Nothing. Stupid. (JA)
(PO Box 17125,Tampa, FL.34682)

KIROUS/SHARPEVILLE - split EP

Sloppy chaotic hardcore from KIROUS, all over the place at breakneck speed. Utter insanity that rocks your face off, great stuff. Fellow Fins SHARPEVILLE deliver two songs of their own—slowed down, but by no means subdued. Plodding heavy hardcore with emotion used to draw you in, instead of pushing you away. Both sides of this were recorded in 1998, and I'm not sure if this is a re-release or if these songs are just now seeing the light, but either way a solid record. (WN)
(Merwi/Halla, PO Box 53, 15141 Lahti, FINLAND, hallajulkaisut@hotmail.com)

KISMET HARDCORE - "Our Message is in the Anger" CD

Mid-tempo political punk rock with dual female/male vocals with varied style. Intelligent songs about consumption, the idolization of bands, and the treatment of mental health to name a few. This is pretty good. (SR)
(Media Attack, 2007 Wilshire Blvd. #808, Los Angeles, CA 90057, www.mediattack.digitalbomb.com)

LEFT WITH NOTHING - "Good Things Come to Those who Wait" CD

Pretty standard metalcore from this Tacoma, WA band, who I think are broken up now and who I think have/had TRIAL members. If you like anything and everything that sounds like ALL OUT WAR, HATEBREED and UNTIL THE END, you'll dig this, but all those bands are better than this. Yes, the breakdowns are heavy and the double kick is a-flying, but if you're interested, you already have at least two dozen records with the exact same riffs found here. Four new songs plus three from the *Wishing in Reverse* EP. (EL)
(Excursion, PO Box 20224, Seattle, WA 98102)

LEG HOUNDS - "...Date Your Daughters!" CD

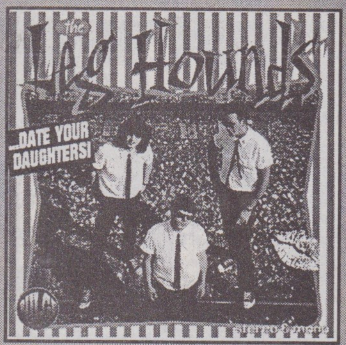
From the land of cheese and the largest six pack of beer come the LEG HOUNDS. These guys either live with their parents or they have seriously filthy apartments, because the only place they seem to have sex is in their cars. That's OK, 'cause I have very fond memories of the vast backseat of a Buick Wildcat. The style of music is similar to the TURBO A.C.S., what with the obsession with cars and girls, but the LEG HOUNDS somehow come off as less likely to give you a venereal disease. (DP)
(Bulge, PO Box 1173, Green Bay, WI 54305, www.angelfire.com/rock/theleghounds)

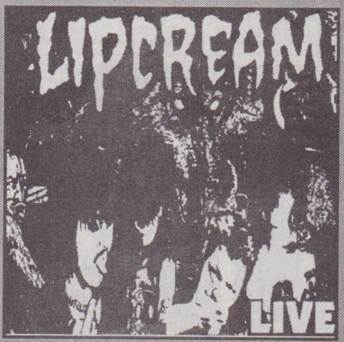
LIFE ALIVE - "The Winning Hand" EP

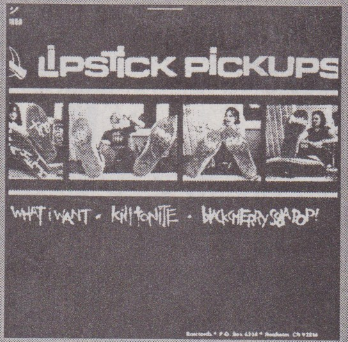
Yes! This tough bunch of skinheads from Okayama, Japan have a brilliant seven inch record available for you on that notorious streetpunk-scooterpunk- skinpunk label: Bronze Fist. LIFE ALIVE start off on the A side with the great song "Two Side"—Fucking A!!! This is a balls-out melodic skinhead anthem with gruff singing and sturdy guitar work!!! Side B starts off real quiet and then begins to wind things up. Great song!!! "Two Side" and "Rising Sun" will appeal to fans of BAD VULTURES, SLEDGEHAMMER, CRACKERJACKS, SIDEBURNS, and CRIKEY CREW. This is a very strong record—Recomended highly!!! (BR)
(Bronze Fist, www.ok96.co.jp, bronze-f@f3.dion.ne.jp)

LIPCREAM/EXECUTE - split EP

This is a bootleg of live songs from two classic Japanese punk bands. Apparently the recording is from 1984 and this is limited to 200 copies. I have been seeing a couple of these live bootlegs popping up lately covering a vari-



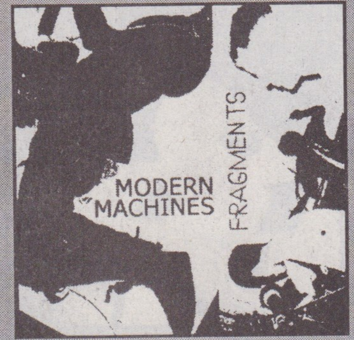




ety of Japanese bands. You know, in all honesty the quality of the recordings aren't that bad, but I question whether I would actually need to own this record. For crazed fans only. (RC)
(no address)

LIPSTICK PICKUPS/BIKINI BUMPS - split EP
BIKINI BUMPS play sassy garage punk—with the emphasis on the punk. Their well done use of melodies makes me sorta think that if this was 1980 they could play with the EYES and the RANDOMS at the Masque and everyone would be stoked to see them. They seem like the sort of band that could get the party hopping. The LIPSTICK PICKUPS, though, are the winner of this split—much the same musical stylings—but the extra chutzpah helps. I don't know if its the dominating snotty female vox or maybe its just the production. Whatever it is—it rules, OK? (MT)
(G.C., PO Box 3743, Laguna Hills, CA 92654)

LOTHAR - "Guts" CD
I am the hammer. Without the little spacey-synth garble running thru the background of this Finnish band's tunes, this CD would be totally unlistenable bar-band trudge. *Bar-band trudge. BAR-BAND TRUDGE.* Okay, I feel better. This is nothing that will make anyone's head turn, not even a quarter-turn. (RW)
(Lorna, www.nic.fi/~lothar)



THE LOTTIE COLLINS - "Runaway to the Mexico/ Pouvatel"
Another fun Japanese garage punk band. Lo-fi, fast, distorted, everything I look for in a band. (CK)
(I Don't Feel A Thing!, PO Box 858, Tempe, AZ 85280, idontfeelathing@yahoo.com)

MR. AIRPLANE MAN - "Moanin'" LP
I love this record. Unlike anything I've heard before, yet reassuringly familiar. The music is slow and bluesy with haunting female vocals. I like to put this record on, lie down on the floor and forget about all my problems. A little form mediation that even helps while I am at work. Amazing that this is a two-piece. Fantastic. (CK)
(Sympathy For The Record Industry, mr_airplaneman@hotmail.com)

MACHINE GUN ETIQUETTE- "Reality Check" LP
Melodic, powerful punk. How come American bands can't play this style without sounding like they are lusting after glory and money? This man has a passionate, determined voice, which he uses perfectly to express his misanthropic, politically hopeless lyrics. The music is soft and jagged and full, like a lot of 1980s Midwest punk bands. This record makes me wanna hold hands with my boyfriend while we smash the state! Get it. (JA)
(Campary, Friedrichstr. 110, 40217 Dusseldorf, GERMANY)

MALLRATS - "Fall in Love All Over Again With the..." LP
Sacramento California's latest hit makers. These guys are amazing. 60s influenced power pop with a nod to the Lookout! '96 sound. With out a doubt one of my favorite bands right now (possibly of all time). Boy genius Ted Angel serves up a dozen Ric-o-phonic soon to be classics in the vein of the BUZZCOCKS, early HI-FIVES, JAM, *Pleasant Dreams*-era RAMONES and maybe even the UNDERTONES and PAUL COLLINS' BEAT. Though the sleeve says thirteen tracks, the LP only has twelve. The CD on the other hand has the thirteenth track—which is so good it hurts. Turns out those lovable Germans at Screaming Apple made a mistake with the printing. This is a flawless record from start to finish. Anyone who has ever loved power pop needs this album. It even captures the energy and fun of their live show (though the synchronized band jumps, Adam's fancy foot work and Ted's kicks and human pretzel guitar stylings are missed). Fans of the DECIBELS (MALLRATS' label mates, home town heroes and fellow well-dressed lads) take notice. This is yet another reason Sacramento rocks harder than your lame-ass city. (BM)
(Screaming Apple, Dustemichstr. 14, 50939, Köln, GERMANY, www.themallrats.com, info@themallrats.com)

MANHUNT - "They Follow. I Fly." CD
East Coast metalcore. Lots of chugga chuggas and anguish interspersed between pretty female vocals and "aren't we introspective?" parts. Only a few steps away from HOOBASTANK or other MTV garbage. (WN)
(Teishu, no address, manhunt@angelfire.com)

MEANWHILE - "The Show Must Go On" EP
Sweden's MEANWHILE play four songs of rough, abrasive, mid-paced DISCHARGE-influenced hardcore in the Swedish tradition of ANTI-CIMEX and CRUDE SS. I'd like it if they'd speed it up, but this is killer shit just the way it is. (VH)
(Feral Ward, 2336 N. Killingsworth, Portland, OR 97217)

THE MISHAPS - "Get Away Volume" CD
Six mediocre poppy punk 'n' roll tunes with mediocre male vocals, lyrics, and guitar tricks.(SR)
(Scissors Press, no address)

MIXTWITCH - "Smile for the Money Shot" CD
This is the ugliest looking CD I've ever seen. Pity, because it's actually pretty good. Maybe it's the blood racing through my veins from the rigorous ultimate frisbee game, or maybe it's the fact that they don't pretend to be arty, but I've taken a liking to MIXTWITCH. They're a ska-punk band, but the ska isn't in every song, so it doesn't get obnoxious. Top it off with snotty vocals and you've got a better than average release. Plus, the singer said that he "got caught with his pants the opposite of up," which made me laugh. (MX)
(Moon Ska, P.O. Box 184, Ashford, Kent, TN24 OZS, ENGLAND, www.mixtwitch.com)

MODERN MACHINES/FRAGMENTS - split CD
Both of these Wisconsin bands have something really amazing going on, giving me the same tingly feeling that went down my spine when I first heard the REPLACEMENTS, or even HUSKER DU. Fuck yeah. (MM)
(New Disorder, 115 Bartlett St, San Francisco, CA 94110)

MORTE POURA/SINITERROR - "Close Your Eyes and You Will See" split EP
Crusty sounds in Italian on one side, charged up with guitar solos and in English on the other. A good combo all recorded in 1999. (SR)
(Elderberry, c/o Karlsson-Hakeskog-Ammar, Hermansvagan 94 kv, 553 54 Jonkoping, SWEDEN)

MUNICIPAL WASTE/BAD ACID TRIP - split EP
BAD ACID TRIP first, quirky grindcore from Southern California. Um, it's pretty good. Now, on to THE FUCKING WASTE! Five songs in tribute to the greatest bad movie actor this side of Sly Stallone, Kurt Russell (dude, what about *Tombstone*? "I'm coming back, and I'm bringing Hell with me!") MUNICIPAL WASTE's genius contin-

ues after their split with CRUCIAL UNIT, the thrashers from Virginia had a lot to live up to, but as anyone who saw them on tour last summer can attest, their DRI-worship thrash does not disappoint. With a new drummer behind the throne, the WASTE takes their mastery of 80s crossover to new heights, and there is none better. Fuck, MUNICIPAL WASTE would positively slay *Technocracy*-era COC, or even DRI themselves in a head-to-head thrash-off, absolutely perfect, and I hear there's an LP on the way...Fuck yeah! (WN)
(Amendment, 580 Nansemond Crescent, Portsmouth, VA 23707)

MURDER DISCO X - "Supercrust" EP
Debut single from these German punx—who play some very ripping yet tuneful hardcore. Fast paced with enough melody to keep your head nodding along, yet not so much so that it doesn't sound pissed. Reminds me a bit of RESIST colliding with SIN DIOS on the Autobahn. I'm down. (MT)
(Murder Disco X, Supperstrasse 3, 70565 Stuttgart, GERMANY)

MUSIC MACHINE - "Turn on the..." LP
Well, I'll be damned...it's one of those rare records that I'll never have to listen to again in my remaining years, as I've already memorized every groove and skip by rote. Fancy looking bootleg of the MUSIC MACHINE's mid-60s LP, with real heavy vinyl and profesh presentation. The MACHINE would be right at home in the early years of the 21st Century: being the first all-boy band to all dye their hair industrial-strength blue black, they were pioneers of the ever-popular "Romulan in Cigarette Pants" look that you can't escape if you live in an urban center. Their big hit was and is "Talk Talk," a sneering number with some of the most embittered words ever to come outta the mouth of a 20-year old ("my social life's a dud/my name is really mud/I'm up to here in lies/I guess I'n down to size"). "The People in Me," "Masculine Intuition," "Trouble" and even the quieter radio-friendly tunes are possessed of a certain Troubled Boy Outsider quality that raises 'em above the level of most schlock of the period. Real existential lurch. All I can say is that if you're just now delving deeper than the HIVES or WHITE STRIPES you oughtta give these boys an early listen. (JH)
(no address)

MUSTARD PLUG - "Yellow #5" CD
These Michigan boys take 90's American ska (ie: not ska) and mix it with sugary upbeat West Coast punk. It's not as horrible as that sounds, for what they do—they do it really well, it's just that I don't really like what they do... Sorry, I thought I was ready to be objective about this kind of music. Maybe in another couple of years. (AD)
(Hopeless, PO Box 7495, Van Nuys, CA 91409).

NADA QUE HACER - "Bunker de Ideas" CD
Son genial punk musica de Uruguay. Se cantan en Espanol excepto la cancion "I'm Sorry" que es una cancion comico en Ingles. Rapido y melodico como BAD RELIGION. Muy Bueno! (AD)
(Nada Que Hacer, Alquimi, C.C. 10884 Suc. Pluna, Montevideo, URUGUAY E-mail: nadaquehacer@yahoo.com)

NEGATIVE STEP/PRETTY LITTLE FLOWER - split EP
The label graphic of the man pounding nails into his head is how I feel when I listen to PRETTY LITTLE FLOWER, but I think that's the point. Full of anger and frustration, all screeching and growling and thrash and pounding drums, yeah—the nails in the head, that's what they're going for. NEGATIVE STEP are less frantic but just as angry. They are a little more melodic in their hardcore sound and don't inspire quite so much rage as PRETTY LITTLE FLOWER. More pissed-off Texans...go figure. (DP)
(2013 Comal, Austin, TX 78722, c/o Dave, PO Box 7537, Houston, TX 77270)

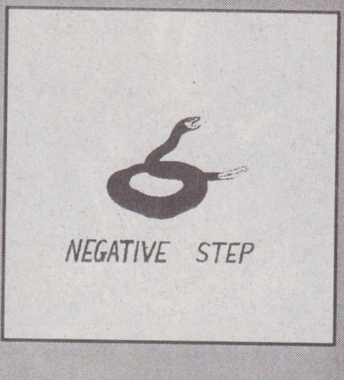
NEON HEARTS - "Venus Eccentric" EP
This is a reissue of the Wolverhampton, England, new wave group NEON HEARTS first single from 1977. The sound is a decent mix of snotty vocals, punk guitar, and saxophone. If you saw NEON HEARTS open for GENERATION X back in the day, you would have pogoed your little boots off. Today this music is quite dated, and, more importantly, it does not fucking rock. This reissue is for new wave archivists and collector geeks only. (BR)
(Neon Hearts, Studley House, 68 Limes Road, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton, WV6 8RV, ENGLAND)

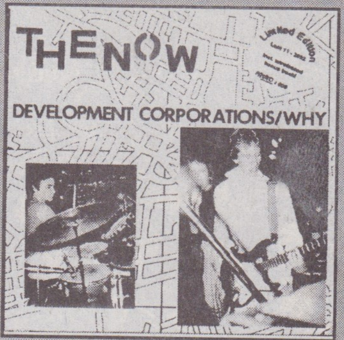
NIHILISTICS - "Nihilistics" LP
Simply put, 20 killer tracks of raw, abrasive, 80s American hardcore. NIHILISTICS, from New York, have showed up recently with tracks on the *New York Thrash* comp and the first *Killed By Hardcore* LP. They were know for their outspoken, tongue-in-cheek, and sometimes crude lyrics and stage performances. These guys are still playing, and haven't done anything more notable than shit their own pants since the early 80s, but this official reissue of the 1983 LP on Brain Eater Records is classic American hardcore. The original booklet is included full of hilarious interviews with the bands... (VH)
(Mad At the World, PO Box 20227, Tompkins Square Station, New York, NY 100009)

NIHILISTICS - "Al-Qaida Detonator" CDEP
More mediocre "shock rock" from these long-time vets of the scene—chocked to the brim with misogynist, nationalist, sexist and racist lyrics. The musical equivalent of shitting one's pants. Fuck, even the music is just inane mid-tempo plodding garbage without even one ounce of the sonic ferocity of their first EP or LP. Time to hang it up, fellas. (MT)
(Visionary)

THE NOMADS - "House of Cards/Think of as One"
From another era of Swedish garage bands, the NOMADS will probably never get the media recognition of newbies. Since most bands are judged by how they dress even by those people who claim to be part of the "real" garage scene (if I had a dollar for every time someone told me how disappointing the LYRES were this past weekend (one of the best shows I've ever seen them play, by the way) because they just "looked" like a bar band, I'd quit my day job), I am happy to see them still playing, cranking out tunes and dressing however the hell they feel like. The A-side is a cool rocker. It's very catchy. B-side is a slow ballad that sounds like a lost later-era REPLACEMENTS tune. I think it's a love song, but it ain't getting me in that mood. (CK)
(Sympathy For The Record Industry, nomads@telia.com)

THE NOW - "Development Corporations" EP
Choppy and mechanistic British punk rock perfect for dancing an awkward jig to...Awkward and earnest. Note that this is an *authorized* reissue that includes a rough take of the title track as well as the original B-side ("Why," which asks the immortal question "Why, why do I even try?") Ever the comedian, Andy Darling points out that they're more the THEN than the NOW. Tuck in. (JH)
(Last Year's Youth, no address)

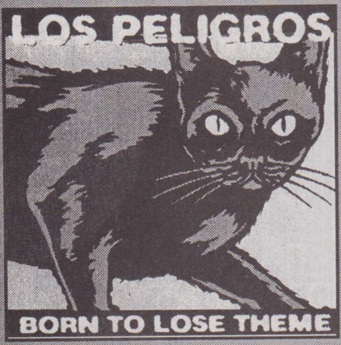




THE NY REL-X - "Paranoia" 10"
I'd be tempted to write this band off for the skate-rock qualities, but the N.Y. REL-X can't be all that bad. After all, they cover an AVENGERS song. (MM)
(Dirty Faces, Universitätsstr. 16, 44789, Bochum, GERMANY, www.daveglassart.itgo.com)

N.Y. REL-X/ANTIDOTE - split EP
N.Y REL-X is mid-tempo, catchy punk with female vocals. I found it prudent to edit out the album art and in fact, all supplementary material when listening to this band. The pretty vocals make for a good, almost art-pop '77 sound, but a flimsy street punk smash. ANTIDOTE, also, is a little too lite for their logo, which includes a dripping syringe in the "T" position. To be fair, production is partially to blame for filtering some of the gruffness out. (AC)
(Dirty Faces, Universitätsstr. 16, 44789, Bochum, GERMANY, www.daveglassart.itgo.com)

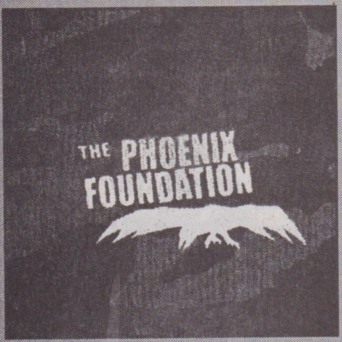
OPERATION MAKEOUT- "Hang Loose" CD
First off, this Canadian band is super nice. Really. I'm not being biased or anything, but hey, I've never met a mean Canadian, alright? Ok, next, OPERATION MAKEOUT are completely amazing too. Katie is such a unique singer, adding to their overall independent sound. They go into the same fun category as SLANT 6. I loved their first self-titled EP, leaving me super juiced for this release. (MM)
(Mint, PO Box 3613 Vancouver, BC V6B 3Y6, CANADA)



OPUS DEAD - "Perros De Presa" CD
I'd like to describe OPUS DEAD, from Spain, as playing aggressive political-punk in the vein of SIN DIOS with occasional straight-forward rock elements of LOS VIOLADORES. Sounds pretty fucking bad ass, huh? Well, I'd by lying if I said that's what they actually sound like... or are even actually influenced by. OPUS DEAD just don't pull it together, spending to much time on hideous instrumental parts and "rock" breakdowns, taking away from any anger, intensity, or integrity their songs might have had. (VH)
(Apdo, 18251, 28080, Madrid, SPAIN, www.sindios.net)

OXO 86 -"Bernauer Bierchansons" LP
If the Germans had invented punk in 1977, this is what it would sound like. Monstrous choruses, lots of horns and a sense of a beer drinking tradition. Not my thing, but they are really fucking good at what they do. If you like getting drunk and skanking, buy this. (JA)
(Skumfuck Mucke, PSF 100709, 46527 Dinslaken, GERMANY, www.scumfucktradition.de)

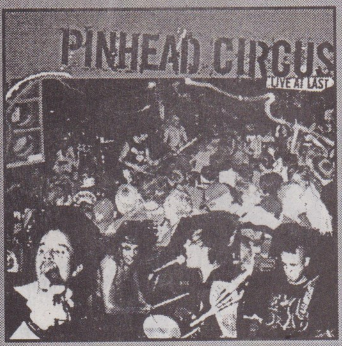
PKRK - "The Worst of PKRK" LP
This cute title actually insinuates "the best of", tee hee. Actually, I hadn't ever heard PKRK before, but these French, melodic, '77-style punkers have an obvious CLASH influence and a good pop sense! PKRK represent their three LPs pretty evenly on this eighteen-song disc. A quality "worst of" collection. (HM)
(Dirty Faces, Universitätsstr. 16, 44789 Bochum, GERMANY, www.dirtyfaces.de)



PAINT BY NUMBERS - "Compromise" CD
PAINT BY NUMBERS play second rate emo pop-punk. Is anybody scouring the pages of this magazine for second rate emo pop-punk bands? The great thing about punk rock is that it's easy to start your own band. The flipside is that we get mountains and mountains of these bands who aren't doing anything wrong but aren't doing anything right either. The layout looks like a SOBE ad. Sorry, guys. (WR)
(no address)

PEAR OF THE WEST – "This Means Little Resistance and the Proof of Existence" CD
Japanese pop punk with a gal singer. On Snuffy Smile, you know this is going to be decent. More straight-forward than DISCOUNT and not as slick as TSUNAMI BOMB. A little room for improvement on the vocal front, but this is still an up and coming band to keep an eye on. (RL)
(Snuffy Smile, pearofthewest@hotmail.com)

LOS PELIGROS - "Born to Lose Theme" EP
Here is a one-sided 7" of the DVD edition title credit sequence to the 1999 film *Born to Lose*. Having never heard of the film, I just looked up the website and watched the trailer. It is described as a pseudo-documentary of a 90s LA band. Seems interesting enough for me to rent so this promo single has succeeded in doing what it set out to do; promote the DVD release of the film. As for the music, it's a bit surfy, kind of rock 'n' roll, with definite HEARTBREAKERS-inspired vocals. Greg Kuen, who played with TSOL, JONESES, BOB DYLAN and did the original music for *Repo Man*, plays all instruments and sings. I actually played it four times at 45 rpm, before realizing I should play it at 33, but it sounded really cool faster. (CK)
(Skull, 3770 Vinton Ave., #23, Los Angeles, CA 90034, dcawker@hotmail.com)



PHOENIX FOUNDATION - "Don't Be Fooled By My Smile" EP
Melodic punk, from Finland that has songs about love and all the confusion that it brings. I wish I could tell you something more about this record, but besides the fact that it is a one sided three song affair, it is incredibly generic. Not bad, just generic. (JF)
(Phoenix Foundation, Ritzinkuja 1 d 20, 20380, Turku, FINLAND)

PINHEAD CIRCUS - "Live at Last" CD
This is like some sorta ten year milestone live recording. PINHEAD CIRCUS delivers an energetic, tight, live performance of 24 blazing tunes. (HM)
(Soda Jerk, PO Box 4056, Boulder, CO 80306, www.sodajerkrecords.com)

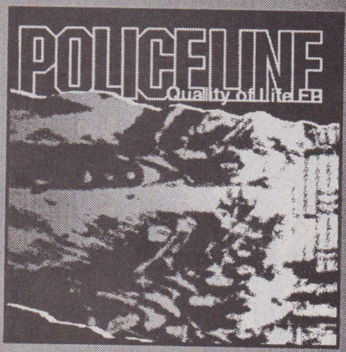
PINHEADS -"Pretty Flowers" CD
Solid punk not afraid to delve into goofy, epic, psychedelic, hippie shit like "Love Power" or "Pretty Flowers" or crank it up loud and fast like "Smoke More Dope." Thankfully, they stay aggressive, abrasive, and snide in an obnoxious way making this a fine CD. (HM)
(Spliff, PO Box 64568, Chicago, IL 60664-0568, www.spliffrecords.com)

POLICE LINE - "Quality of Line" EP
This is hard charging East Coast hardcore from Albany, NY. Buzzing guitars, with just enough speed to keep it interesting. Overall, it is pretty by-the numbers, but I am sure it can still get the stage dives and circle pit going when they play live. (RC)
(Too Circle, c/o Shingo Maeda, 3*29-18 Toyotama-Minami, Nerima-Ward, Tokyo 176-0014 JAPAN; toocir@xd5.so-net.ne-jp)

POLIKARPA Y SUS VICIOSAS - "Globalizacion" EP

Mad, screamy punk from Colombia. The feel of it reminds me of German and Eastern Euro crust—especially the vocals, which play between high squeals and menacing, low growls. They'd do great in a lineup with New Jersey's WITCH HUNT, reviewed last month, not just for the sound, but also for the creepy inquisition art and political lyrics. Topical songs like "There is No Hope?" with lyrics like "Anyone who shows opposition disappears/We are stagnated in times of war" are arresting, and make me thankful that the message has gotten even this far. A four-label split. (AC)

(Campary, Friedrichstr. 110, 40217 Dusseldorf, GERMANY, campary-rec@web.de)



PROLES - "My Sister's Friend" EP

........old punk re-issue EP? ....no info...two 45s crammed onto one...and it's almost as good as having two big fists up your ass....totally motherfucking hot shit!!!!!!!! .....this is what punk rock sounded like back in 1937......before most of yous kids were born.....way before you had that big dick in your mouth.....before the cell phone even....believe it or not...................!!!!! There was once a period where punk rock was a waste-land of wimp bands with quirky hooks and faggy singers......and yes you better believe those were *much* better times than now. No doubt about it...... (SW)

(no address)

PUFFBALL - "Solid State (Eight Track) 10"

I remember Dead Beat Records used to put out really good stuff from the STATICS and PRIMATE 5... I miss those days. More Swedish big rawk. Denim, Les Pauls, riffs, and I bet you, a lot of hair and side burns. This sounds like a TURBONEGRO rip off (I'm glad the Ass Fuckers are back because they are going to show these yahoos how it's done.. motherfuckers). Anyway this isn't anything worth writing home about... or actually writing about at all... hey, why am I doing this? (BM)

(Dead Beat, PO Box 283, Los Angeles, CA 90078)

PUNKIDS. S. - "The First No Family" EP

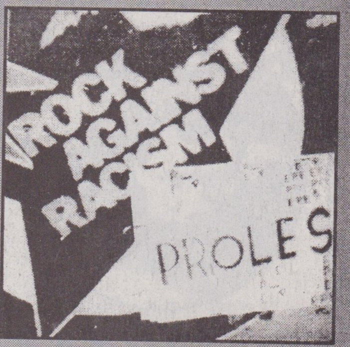
There's a whole fucking slew of records in the bin this month that have "music for haters" printed on them. Maybe it's a kind of a series or something. Maybe I'll never know what it's all about. I must be a hater, because this really tickles my fancy. This *is* punk rock. It's simple and straightforward, it's raw, it's delivered with some emotion. Wow. I know nothing about the band, but with names like Luca and Rapo, I'm guessing there from another country—maybe even another planet. It appears that this is limited to 250 copies. Get off your lazy ass and go find one. And if the others in this "music for haters" series are half as good as this, you might as well go ahead and pick up those as well. (KK)

(Hate, c/o Subterranean)

THE QUAILS- "Atomosphere" LP

Some times the QUAILS sound like the NEED, and other times, SLEATER-KINNEY, and maybe even AIN'T. I'm alright with that. "Soon the Rest Will Fall" is aperticularly powerful song, about our lovely San Francisco. (MM)

(Inconvenient,, 3288 21st St. #188 San Francisco, CA 94110)



RACEBANNON - "In the Grips of the Light" 2xLP

This is a record for the same kind of people who like the BLOOD BROTHERS. They may not sound exactly the same but it's something in the whinny vocals and the extended use of seemingly random noise that attracts the former hardcore kids turned hipsters. It's as if they decided they needed something beyond the mid 90s emo they use to listen to but can't take it quite as far as Sony has at GSL. (PA)

(Secretly Canadian, www.secretlycanadian.com)

RAMONES - "Eaten Alive! Vol. 2" LP

While it would take something of a miracle to surpass the RAMONES' official live double-LP, this comes close. Side one was recorded in New York, 1982, and comes from a sharp-sounding board mix (with a ripping version of "Blitzkrieg Bop"). The flip was recorded in Santa Cruz Civic Auditorium the same year; although the mix over-favors the guitars, the performance is almost as intense. This comes on a handsome picture disc with eighteen tracks total. If you haven't acquired this yet, here's a chance to get some of the boys' most urgent recordings. Very strongly recommended. (SS)

(no address)

REVEREND NORB - "Earth's Greatest Rocker" CD

Yep. The second solo release from the right (dis)honorable Reverend Robert Ugly of acts a diverse as SUBURBAN MUTILATION and BORIS THE SPRINKLER. Thirteen tracks, comedy dialogues, and assorted madcap shenanigans. Kinda pop-frat rock hyrbrid dangerously close to busting at the stitches. Fun noise, though it's suffused by overwrought kookiness that is perhaps best appreciated by others than myself. Nice saxophones. (JH)

(Bulge, PO Box 1173, Green Bay, WI 54305)

REVOLVERS/DUANE PETERS & THE HUNNS - split LP

This isn't bad. Duane Peters is a punk rock icon... same old bag of tricks. Catchy, scratchy vocaled street punk. It's decent—what else do you want from me? The REVOLVERS are a glammed up nail polish, eye liner, and sparkles street punkish band that digs the JAM. All and all... I would never listen to this again. It's just not my thing. Maybe Bruce Roehrs would like this but I don't. Gimmie a break! I am still stuck on the MALLRATS LP! (BM)

(Dirty Faces, Universitatsstr 16, 44789 Bochum, GERMANY, www.dirtyfaces.de)

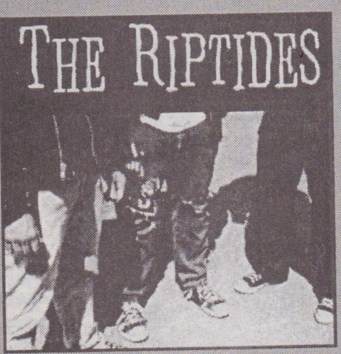
THE RIFFS - "Underground Kicks" LP

"We are the RIFFS, we are the RIFFS, we are the RIFFS..." OK, we get it. A vinyl release of a previously released CD that some suspect was mastered at the wrong speed. If you've got a turntable that has pitch control, you might try fussing with it to see if you agree. I'm not sure that I do, but they do seem to be holding back just a bit. This is old school street punk. Isn't that what the kids are calling these days, Bruce? It's catchy as fuck, anthem-like at times, and I really like it, but it does seem to drag. Recommended at +4 on pitch adjustment. (KK)

(Zurich Chainsaw Massacre, c/o J. Loderer, PO Box 44, CH-8953 Dietikon 2, SWITZERLAND)

RIISTETERROR - "Taabajara Hardcore" EP

What a concept: RIISTETYT from Finland and SICK TERROR from Brazil join forces and form one band, and what an unholy communion it is too. This is the best stuff these Fins have done in years, its pretty much exactly how you'd imagine if both these two bands' sound met head on—rough and abrasive hardcore from the Finland and



more metallic breakneck hardcore from Brazil. This so frantic and urgent and proves why these bands are so highly respected. Lyrics in Portuguese, Finnish and English add to the international flavor—an absolutely ripping record. (TB)
(Hardcore Holocaust, PO Box 26742, Richmond, VA 23621. www.hardcoreholocaust.com)

RIPCORD - "Discography Part One" LP
I cannot believe these records came out sixteen years ago... time flies. They still sound as relevant and urgent as they did back then. RIPCORD appeared during the wilderness years of UK punk (after anarcho and just before metal blighted the scene). The first two records (compiled here) originally as a flexi and LP, showcase the first phase of the band with Buzby on vocals where they mine the early Boston sound like GANG GREEN, F.U.s etc with lyrics about animal rights, government stupidity and the like. Its total raw-as-fuck paint blistering urgent hardcore and although influenced by bands across the pond, the band had a real signature sound of their own. The band's later LP and 7" are much more influenced by SIEGE, but that's another story. This band is one of my all time favourites and I still get a chill listening to this,..ahhh memories memories. Kids new to hardcore would do well listening to this, in order to hear how it should be done. Magic. (TB)
(Skuld, Malmsheimerstr. 14, 71272, Renningen, GERMANY)

RIPTIDES - "Drop Out" CD
This is pretty useless. Joe Queer produced this and him and Wimpy (original QUEERS lead singer) sings a few tunes... those are the only tunes that don't totally suck. This just sounds like a fourth generation QUEERS knock off. The production is decent. Joe is a good producer and probably helped these guys out a lot with song structure and tips... unfortunately it doesn't make a difference. How long until these guys are temporary QUEERS? (BM)
(Goblin)

ROBOT HAS WEREWOLF HAND - "The Love & Destruction" EP
Wow! This is some great thrashing punk that hits you fast and furious. All the songs are short and to the point. There are some awesome time changes and great male/female vocals that exude a lot of anger and emotion. Apparently this band contains members of the CONTROL and THEY LIVE. An outstanding release! (RC)
(Solomon Method, David Partridge, 516 Park Crescent, Pickering Ontario CANADA)

RUDI - "Fourteen Steps to Death" EP
What's with all the RUDI reissues? I feel bad as I didn't pay much attention to these guys back when I was a kid, being more interested in the English and American bands of the day. This is four songs from slightly later period RUDI, recorded in 1981. It's more mellow than "Big Time" but equally as good. Catchy dark pop reminding me of American "post" punk of the early-to-mid 80s like *Fire in the Rain*-era AGENT ORANGE, the NILS, and even the REPLACEMENTS. (AD)
(Last Year's Youth)

RUDI - "The Pressure's On/Who You?"
Interesting release from Belfast's first and woefully underrated punk band. This record was due to be their third single, but for one reason was never released until now. Although some of this band's later material is total limp dick, their early stuff is great power edged punk. Both songs are great catchy punk, the like of which you seldom hear these days. Less abrasive than STIFF LITTLE FINGERS—having more in common with stuff like the JAM and the CHORDS with more balls, classic stuff indeed. (TB)
(Last Year's Youth)

RUDI - "Yummy Yummy Yummy" CD
I first heard RUDI when they were on a *Rodney on The ROQ* comp. Strange mix, with all the Cali bands, but I guess it was a radio favorite. Loved the song, but they're a tough band to find records by. Hence, it was truly a fine day a few years back when I saw some british psuedo major put out a RUDI collection on CD. A no-brainer on the purchase front. This Irish band put out modish punk pop with a patented open ringing string sound. You know, the "Alternative Ulster" trick. Anyways, I guess I'm figuring out that not all RUDI was on that collection. With a batch of three re-issues of 7"s, you cannot go wrong. RUDI was great in the same way the CHORDS and the JAM were great, without the suits. Classic! (RL)
(Last Year's Youth)

SS ULTRABRUTAL - "Monstren Mumien Mutationen" LP
More links in the chain of Weird System's perfect re-ish's of classic Deutsch-punk. Mid-tempo'd and melodic, borrowing somewhat from the likes of STIFF LITTLE FINGERS (an *exceptionally* raw STIFF LITTLE FINGERS, mind you) or even more so their fellow countrymen SLIME, this here would be their 1983 LP seeing the light of day again. I love this sort of stuff, and am happy as a clam that it is available again. Young punx would do themselves some good seeking this out. (MT)
Weird System, Lange Reihe 101, 2000 HH 1, GERMANY)

SAGGER - "Mind Wrath" EP
"Something inside" says Mr. Skull Rider (the singers name), singing it over and over again on the A side. Something inside me says, this is mediocre and boring. Yet, something inside me says side B is way better and even pretty good. Something inside me says: I bet these guys are way better live than on this minimal two song 45 release. The sound is kinda sleazy loud & punky rock 'n' roll comparable to the last CLONE DEFECTS album meeting T-REX. 1/2 good & 1/2 blah blah.. (AS)
(Goodbye Boozy, Via Villa Pompetti 147, 64020 S. Nicolo A Tordino, Teramo, ITALY)

SCALPLOCK - "Spread the Germs" LP
SCALPLOCK tear through some raging crusty-grindcore on this LP. The music is thundering with lots of low-end crunch and it goes through a variety of tempo changes (though blazing fast sounds the best) And the singer compliments the music well by screeching his fucking head off as if he was jumping around in a fit of rage on every song. The only drawback to this record is that they used a photo that is from the cover of the DEAD KENNEDYS *Plastic Surgery Disasters* LP How about some originality guys? (RC)
(On The Verge, Orchard House, Breeds Road, Great Waltham, Chelmsford, Essex CM3 1EE, UK)

SECTORSEVEN - "Sectorseven" CD
Melodic hardcore with a heavy AVAIL influence (especially in the vocals). Very slick and well produced...a little too slick to make SECTORSEVEN truly stand apart from Warped Tour hardcore, although it is certainly better than most bands that get lumped into that genre. (WN)
(Sonic Union, PO Box 57347 Jackson Station, Hamilton, ONT L8P 4X2 CANADA)

SEMA 4 - "Four from..." EP
SEMA 4 represent one of those unaccountably agreeable amalgams of styles that makes for near-classics—a combination of '78-ish mod and melodic, mid-speed punk that achieves a genuine feeling of quadrophenia on all four tracks. For my tastes, more listenable than anything the WHO ever put out—and this has a nostalgic limited edition on red vinyl. Strongly recommended. (SS)
(Last Year's Youth)

SEND MORE PARAMEDICS - "A Feast for the Fallen" CD
Sounds like SLAYER, but not as heavy, and the vocals would make Tom Araya chuckle. I'm trying to find another more appropriate way to describe SEND MORE PARAMEDICS, but as each song ends, I just think "SLAYER." I like SLAYER, so I think this is pretty darn good. Nothing newer than *South of Heaven.* (WN)
(In At The Deep End, 82 Barlow Drive South, Awsworth, Notts, NG16 2TD ENGLAND)

SEX PISTOLS - "Psychotic Reaction" LP
The best band to ever include ex-HAWKWIND roadies, the SEX PISTOLS have transcended punk rock to become the cartoon characters that Julian Temple originally portrayed them as in 1978. This live boot comes straight from the pre-Cartoon Channel 70s, when the PISTOLS were trudging through the deep South on an intellectual exercise aimed at amusing their manager's lame sense of the absurd. Here are the class-conscious PISTOLS on stage in fucking Baton Rouge, LA, in January 1978. Not New York, not LA, not Cleveland, but in a hostile club full of curiosity-seeking hicks. Wherever the RAMONES played, a dozen bands would start; not so for the PISTOLS, who were doomed to play the role of manager's tool in towns with hardly any nascent scenes at all. Decent sound, you've heard these songs a million times already. Historically frustrating. (RW)
(no address)

SHACKLES AWAIT - "And for What?" EP
Ugly apocalypse-core from Oklahoma. I missed them on tour this summer (we were there when they were here, and vice versa), and this record makes me all the more disappointed. Although it suffers slightly from the recording, these four songs are dynamic and powerful and stand well on their own while bringing to mind US bands like FROM ASHES RISE and REMAINS OF THE DAY, as well as an occasional hint of Japanese hardcore. Awesome. (WN)
(shacklesawait666@yahoo.com)

SHADOWS OF KNIGHT - "Follow" LP
........holy cow!!!! ....yet another *bootleg*!!!!!!!! .....like AL STEWART sez; this must be the year of the boot!!!!!!!! ....problem is i'm not really a SHADOWS kinda dude....as a matter-a-fact I think they're kinda smelly.....like a fart!!!!! ....but, ...I'll have to admit that there are a few cuts on this platter that make my drug intake enjoyable...... lotsa fuzz guitar and green bud.......nipple-twisters and carpet burns..... five tubes of KY and six hits of blaze......7 and 7 is.....2+2 is on my mind...... wow!!!! .....maybe these guys weren't so bad after all..... (SW)
(no address)

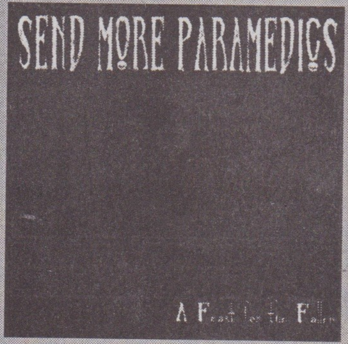
SHARK ATTACK - "Blood In the Water" CD
SHARK ATTACK came and went pretty quickly in the world of hardcore, but they have left behind a couple recordings that are documented on this CD. This CD compiles all of their studio efforts plus a live set from CBGB's. This is straightforward go-for-the-throat hardcore that follows the path laid out by classic NY bands from the early 80s like ANTIDOTE. Everything is crisp, clear and fucking angry. The only drawback of this CD is that the live recording from CBGB's is really low and kind of muffled. Regardless, if you missed getting their EP the first time around, then you should check this out! (RC)
(My War, 36 Kings Circle, Malvern, PA 19355-2002; mywarrecords.com)

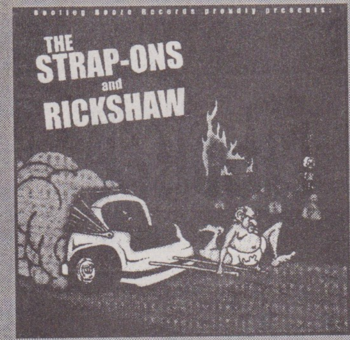
SHOCKS - "More Cuts For You In Zero Two" LP
Wacky German guys—spikey hair, "Kill me I'm Rotten" LUCHS BROS. t-shirts, and eyeliner. Christ, this is fun dancey pogo punk. Think a more raw VIBRATORS and BUZZCOCKS singing all in German and you've got the SHOCKS. The one song totally reminds me of the *SCTV* SEX PISTOLS spoof skit with John Candy and Martin Short—the vocals are identical. No need to give this a long review, cuz it's brilliant. Get it, buy it, order it—deutschmark, dollar, or euro, send 'em all in for a copy of this LP. (AS)
(Dirty Faces, c/o Universitatsstr 16, 44789 Bochum, GERMANY, dirtyfaces.de)

SHOWERING ASHES - "Beauty at the Price of Vanity" EP
SHOWERING ASHES, who are from Iowa, hammer through five songs of dark angry hardcore. Driving metallic guitars lead the way as the vocalist howls away about the failure of the American Dream. The songs vary in speed from up-tempo to chugging and gloomy. The recording has a touch of rawness to it, which enhances to overall feel of the tunes. Good stuff. (RC)
(Scenester Credentials, PO Box 1275, Iowa City, IA 52240; mapashow@yahoo.com)

THE SIMPLETONES - "I Have a Date" LP
Like a mutated turd from Brian Wilson's toilet the SIMPLETONES evolved to become one of the archetypal LA punk bands in the late 70s. Sure BLACK FLAG, X, GERMS, and the DICKIES are names that immediatley spring to mind but I think it was bands like the SIMPLETONES and the CROWD that brought the beach to punk (or brought punk to the beach...) mixing new wave, rock 'n' roll, and Mod sounds to create an ultra sharp, catchy hybrid. "I Like Drugs" remains a teenage classic to this day, and the SIMPLETONES caustic humor is something I wish we had a lot more of in these days of safe-and-clean mall mentality. *I Have A Date* collects various recordings from 1978-'79 and puts the SIMPLETONES "of Rosemead" on 12" vinyl (*I think*) for the first time. Essential listening. Oh the good old days... (AD)
(Re-Force, T.Drescher: Woehlerhof 4, 30900 Wedemark, GERMANY)

SIN DIOS/INNER CONFLICT - split EP
Two brilliant Euro bands on one convenient little seven inch record—Germany's INNER CONFLICT deliver us two tracks of defiant and melodic punk rock which reminds me a bit of HARUM SCARUM or even more so The JOYCE McKINNEY EXPERIENCE. Great stuff. SIN DIOS, who man the flipside, present to you two more-quick paced melodic thrashers ripping at the fabric of capitalism and rich scum bags which dominate our world. Brilliant and essential. (MT)
(Twisted Chords, Reutweg 1a, 76327 Pfinztal, GERMANY, www.twisted-chords-shop.de)





SKIT SYSTEM/NASUM - split EP

This is a fucking monster!! Two bands that define "Swedish Hardcore" and execute the style to pummeling perfection. SKIT SYSTEM offer up two tunes that are as good as anything I've heard from them. And NASUM's slightly faster, slightly more metal style rips through five songs of ripping hardcore with occasional blast beats. As close to perfect as a record can get, only 1100 pressed, act now! (WN)
(No Tolerance, PO Box 543, 611 10 Nykoping, SWEDEN)

SOCIAL DISTORTION - "Mommy's Little Monster" LP

It's being reissued *again*? SOCIAL D's classic debut remains available to you lucky kids thanks to Doug Moody (I was wandering what happened to that guy) so now you can own ten copies of the same record. It was good then, it's still good now I guess, but I'd rather see that first DOGGY STYLE EP reissued. So what if it's on... (AD)
(Doug Moody, PO Box 1596 San Marcos, CA 92069)

SOME GIRLS - "The Rains" EP

Looking at the deceptively minimalist packaging, I was expecting some art school post-punk band. Was I in for a surprise—SOME GIRLS aim to mutilate with full-on brutal hardcore, complete with bitter, barbed lyrics. Reminds me of BORN AGAINST but not in a copycat way, just maybe in spirit. Good stuff. (AM)
(Deathwish, 432 Morris Ave, Providence, RI 02906, info@deathwishinc.com)

SOUL EMIGRE - "Leaving Out Empty Bodies" EP

Relatively over-the-top "emotional" hardcore here. Mix DAG NASTY or BAD RELIGION melody and hooks with any sub-par "new school" hardcore band and you can get the picture. The one question I have is, if you get a tattoo as bad as "My Heart Bleeds" across your chest, do you really need to have a picture of it on your record? (SP)
(Jorick Emigre, Heemskerckstraat 22, 6828 ZG Arnhem, NETHERLANDS, xjorickx@yahoo.com)

SOUTH BAY BESSIE - "Maybe Not" CD

Weird, this band has some really interesting ideas that come out in the intros to their songs. If they worked from those ideas, they might come up with something cool. Instead, every song turns into pretty mediocre pop punk that give me the whole midwest vibe. I'm thinking TUESDAY, SQUIRTGUN, and others among them. The band also uses really interesting song titles which makes me wish there were lyrics printed. Layout is a little too computer graphics for me. Looks like a nice group of guys. Maybe a fun live band. (WR)
(Code Seven)

SPITALFIELD – "The Cloak and Dagger Club" CD

A good EP release that draws from the likes of JIMMY EAT WORLD and power pop. Heavy on channel switching on the guitar front. This has a nice feel. Not original, but still a good listen. (RL)
(Sinister, PO Box 1178, Lagrange, IL 60526, www.sinisterlabel.com)

STARVATIONS - "One Long Night" CDEP

Didn't know they made records like this'n anymore. An amalgamation of early 80s indie-punk moves that bring to mind early LEGAL WEAPON and the GUN CLUB; strictly for comparison's sake you understand. Good production makes for a generous showcase of the lyrics and the band shows decent moxie and imagination. I'm not thinking along with the singer or anything (yeah, that's *my* life too, dude!), but I catch the bloozy-punk drift here. Do you? (RW)
(Kapow, PO Box 1287, Lake Forest, CA 92609)

STOCKHOLM PIGS - "Passed Out on the Floor..." 10"

From Sweden, STOCKHOLM PIGS mash together all of the best aspects of hardcore and crust to create this distinctly Swedish sounding twelve song 10". It's relentlessly fast, stripped down punk, with harsh vocals, and perfectly rough production. (VH)
(Bent Edge, c/o Stark, Ryttargatan 4A, S-169 51 Solna, SWEDEN, bentedge@hotmail.com)

STRAP-ONS/RICKSHAW - split EP

Holy shit this sucks. RICKSHAW sound like crappy tough guy punk with shouted back-ups. Yawn. Forgive me if this doesn't intimidate me, nor make me wanna fuck shit up in the pit. Les Pauls and riffs aren't always good things. I bet these guys are from Sweden or Norway. Lousy Euro rockers.... And the STRAP-ONS? Don't even get me started. They sound like they wish they were from the UK but unfortunately call Virginia their home. This is pure crap. Retro-UK bullshit. Yawn! (BM)
(Bootleg Booze, c/o Larsson, V. Kyrkogatan 68, 671 51 Arvika, SWEDEN, info@bootlegboozed.com)

STRONG CROWD - "Fight for Tomorrow" EP

On this platter we find some really catchy and über-anthemic Japanese street punk played at quick pace. Some of you American and Euro chaps who favor the slow and plodding crap oi thing could learn a thing or two from these punx. Fans of DICKIE SPIKIE or the CASUALTIES should mos def take note… pogo till ya puke! (MT)
(Bronze Fist, 5-2-104-203, Higashi, Toyonaka, Toyonaka-City, Osaka, JAPAN)

THE SUPERBEES - LP

Here we go kids, get ready to rock with your cock out. In the spirit of forefathers TED NUGENT and IGGY, come the SUPERBEES with four heavy 70s inspired coliseum rock tunes. Go score some pot and head to the ditch. (DL)
(Sonic Fever, PO Box 481251, Los Angeles, CA 90048)

BERT SWITZER - "1977-2002" CD

High concept. A CD compilation of bands that this dude has played drums for over the last 25 years—you heard me right. The first track is a recent free-jazz freakout with Mr. Switzer's busy and nimble drum fills propelling a tangle of guitars and keyboards. My spider-sense warns me of imminent danger. This leads into a murky live recording of "Crazy Train" from 1985 (?), followed frail hippie drone by one JOE RAINBOW that starts my stomach to churning in the worst possible way. Guess this made into into *MRR* by virtue of the tracks by the DESTROYED, a shaggy Boston punk band from the late 70s who I have no previous truck with. It's the kind of thuggy gank that treads a line between 1975 Amateur Night and safety-pin punk of the *Chips* variety. *1977-2002* will make a worthy stocking stuffer for Mr. Switzer's grandchildren. Me, I coulda done without any of it. (JH)
(www.bertswitzer.com)

TERMINAL DYSENTERY/LEAGUE OF STRUGGLE - split EP

TERMINAL DYSENTERY are a fucking mess, but they rule anyway. Dual vocals (rabid Chihuahua vs. agi-

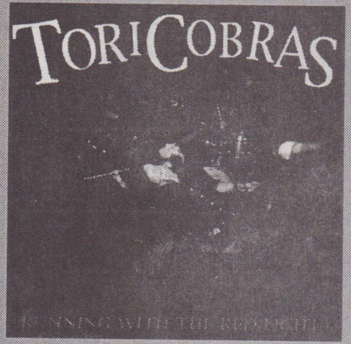
tated gorilla) backed with frantic thrash at 30 second intervals. The LEAGUE OF STRUGGLE are just as pissed off, just as thrashy with alternating screech and growl vocals. Both bands have the lyrical content that you would expect from politically aware straight edge pissed off Texans in these times. Thanks a fucking lot, George W. (DP)
($3 ppd: H6C6T6B@yahoo.com)

TRK - LP
TRK (parenthetically known as THIS ROBOT KILLS) are an odd bunch that delve into the kind of noise quirk that alienates both TRAGEDY and DETROIT COBRAS admirers. Just add beer, water, and four-way window-pane and you're in for the audio thrill-ride of a lifetime. Combines bearded hippies with drumsticks, analog synthesizers, and the kind of dense outer space drone that early CHROME used to generate so effectively. Somewhere between obscurity and your world's destruction lies TRK. (JH)
(Corleone, PO Box 65, Providence, RI 02901)

THROWBACKS - "Throwbacks" EP
Mid-tempo generic streetpunk from Florida on the aptly named Dim record label. Actually it's not that bad, if you dug BLITZ you'll dig this. Definitely up Bruce Roehrs' alley. (AD)
(Dim, U. Grossmann, Postfach 11, D-96237, GERMANY)

TIME TO FLY - "Birth. Work. Death" CD
It's been quite a while since I could describe something as "quirky," but damned if this doesn't do it for me in this really odd way. Yes, they sound a whole crap-load like THURSDAY, but I think there's a little more to it than that. They add little electronic bits, and really weird, off-kilter guitar parts, plus the back-up vocals are dead-on ANNIVERSARY. A lot of people would find that off-putting, but I think it fits nicely. I feel like this band needs to take their weirdness a step further to really come up with something original. It's already pretty good, but it could be epic. (MX)
(RocketStar, P.O. Box 54108, Redondo, WA 98054-0108, timetoflymusic.com)

TÖDLICHER IRRTUM - "Hauptsache gesund..." LP
TÖDLICHER IRRTUM offer an LP of good-time, drunken German punk rock anthems. All the liner notes and lyrics are in German, but I gather some of their more basic themes of something four times a day, A&O, assholes and loving rock 'n' roll. You get the idea. A solid LP. (HM)
(Scumfuck, PSF 100709, 46527 Dinslaken, GERMANY, www.toedlicher-irrtum.de, www.scumfucktradition.de)



TORI COBRAS - "Running with the Red Light" CD
The TORI COBRAS begin with a wall of sound instrumental a la the FUCKING CHAMPS on "When Guitars Attack," a fitting song title indeed. In fact, all the music on this CD rocks as hard as the FUCKING CHAMPS, but they've added some distorted vocals and organs and harmonica to make for an interesting listen. (DP)
(Pure Noise Forever, PO Box 86528, San Diego, CA 92138, www.toricobras.com)

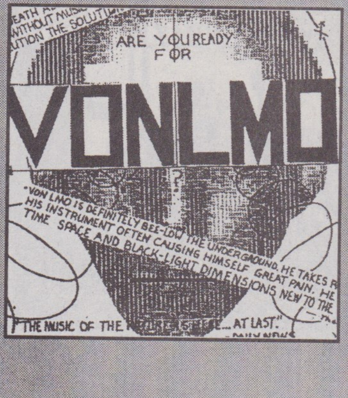
TOMMY AND THE TERRORS - "On the Run" EP
Didn't know what to expect with this record by the cover of a guitar rising from the grave via a green arm. Was I going to get a MISFITS-inspired diddler, or a piece of ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN punk 'n' roll madness. Well, TOMMY & THE TERRORS remind me of another band that used to be on TKO, SIXER, yet with more of a street punk edge, less rock 'n' roll. Not bad kids. (JF)
(TKO, 3216 W.Cary St., #303, Richmond, VA 23221)

TOXIC NARCOTIC - "We're all Doomed" LP
I've never given a damn about these dinosaurs of punk. These new songs didn't have much of an impact on me, sounding exactly as dull, cliche, and fucking awful as they did ten years ago. Fourteen tracks of fast, straight forward punk that's sure to keep TOXIC NARCOTIC fans smiling, drunk and sedated... and likely to induce vomiting all around. (VH)
(Go-Kart, PO Box 20, Prince St.. Station, New York, NY 10012)

TRAVOLTAS – "Endless Summer" CD
A new full length from these Euro pop masters. If you like songs about girls and beaches with a power pop feel, this is the band for you. A little less produced than their last LP and not quite as solid, but these are small gripes for a band that raised the bar on the punk pop front. Fill in obligatory BEACH BOYS-meets-the RAMONES reference. A great band! (RL)
(Fastmusic, PO Box 206512, New Haven, CT 06520, www.travoltas.com)

THE TRI-CITY THUNDERCATS - "Technology Makes Me Sleepy" EP
Highly energetic, garagey rock 'n' roll here. The guitars have a jangly, abrasive quality that put me in mind of a combination of THE WEDDING PRESENT and the FALL. This is rocking. Pick it up. (AM)
(I Don't Feel A Thing!, PO Box 858, Tempe, AZ 85280, idontfeelathing@yahoo.com)

TURBO ACs - "Damnation Overdrive" CD
The TURBO A.C.'S play that gas-fueled rock 'n' roll that has been invading the punk scene for a few years. The thing about the TURBO ACs is they are better at it than most. Their passion for cars and girls and looking cool just infuses energy right onto the CD. (DP)
(Blackout!, 931 Madison St, Hoboken, NJ 07030, www.nytrash.com/turboacs)



VERMIN - "All Right Tonight" CD
This isn't bad. It wreaks of Mutant Pop clone-ness. They do it well though. Well thought out and well played. Maybe the RIPTIDES should take some lessons from these guys. Decent pop punk that doesn't suck... still they ain't no MALLRATS. Nothing I get this month can compare to that band. But anyway. This is worth picking up if you think Tim Chandler, Joe Queer, and Ben Weasel are humanitarians and still put out great records. (BM)
(X-Ray, www.geocites.com/verminvermin, thevermin@hotmail.com)

VON LMO - "Tranceformer (Future Language 2.001) 2xLP
I'm not sure of the origin of these tracks or whether they were ever released. I apologize if I'm betraying a vast gap in my musical knowledge. The liner notes describe an extensive career of arty prog-rock and No Wave, and I don't doubt that VON LMO had an influence on DEVO, SONIC YOUTH, or many of the other bands mentioned herein, but the more I read and listen, the more I feel like I've encountered a 1970s version of ANDREW W.K., albeit with saxophones. Okay, maybe that's a little harsh. Maybe someone with a little more knowledge will chime in and correct me? (AM)
(Munster, PO Box 18107, 28080 Madrid, SPAIN, munster@munster-records.com)

VON LMO - "Are You Ready" EP

I will save everyone a little time here. Just go buy that swanky new VON LMO double LP that has his monster no-wave CHROME-a-diddle-beat greatest hits and pass on this little chestnut, which does not feature his best moments. Curious as to why these songs were selected for a 7". Hmmm... (RW)
(Munster, PO Box 18107, 28080 Madrid, SPAIN, munster@munster-records.com)

WHITMORE - "Smoke the Roach" CD

Visualize this: a pot leaf with a roach on it. No joke, that's the cover of this album. Remember LESS THAN JAKE? I thought ska was dead. Maybe I just want it to be dead. Same with that band BLINK 182, that so many bands these days think it's cool to sound like. Ha. Little do they know... (MM)
(Moon Ska Europe, PO Box 184, Ashford, Kent, TN24 0ZS, ENGLAND)

XFILESX - "ABC Mayhem" EP

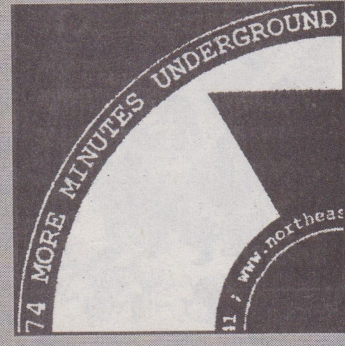
I'm still in hiding from a beatdown for last month's review of this band's split with SELF DEFENSE. If you're not familiar with this band's sarcastic brand of thrashy hardcore, then this is as good an intorduction as anything else they've released. If you thought CHARLES BRONSON weren't straight edge enough, then this band is for you. Once again the song titles are hilariously funny, and lyrics are even better. Lyrics to the short song "The Thing About Edgebreakers is..." are as follows "They broke their edge." I love it. (CC)
(Getting the Fear, 3 Webster Pl, Newtown, CT 06470)

XPRESS - "Junked-Up Judy/Stop Start (and Go Back Again)"

Another reissue of another apparently classic power punker...it's a new one on me...I dunno, people think I must know every fucking old record just because I'm so old...can't help it if my pubic hair is turning grey, but records like this help me get hard without Viagra...sorry, I forgot that I'm not Shane White. Good record. (DD)
(no address)

X-RAY SPEX - "Plastic Fantastic" LP

I'm actually not very fond of female singers in punk—Debbie Harry, Joan Jett, and...well that's about it, but it has to be said that I think Poly Styrene (before she was abducted by intergalactic Hare Krishnas) had the perfect voice for punk rock. If you have never heard *Germ-Free Adolescents* then read no further and go out and get the CD (or "record" if you are of that age) and then we will be on the same page. This release comes with no information other than that is studio sessions from London, 1978. I'm sure they've already been booted in some shape or form. You get all the tracks off *Germ Free* except "I Can't Do Anything" and "Plastic Bag," plus two alternate versions of "Identity" and "Art-i-ficial" and another track, "Age." The sound quality is fine, but if you already have the album, there's really no need to get this unless you are that big of a fan. *But what a voice!* (AD)
(no address)

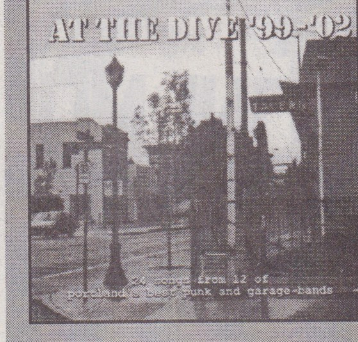


V/A - "74 Minutes Uunderground" CD

I'm pretty impressed by the variety that is present in this release. Featuring the unfamiliar faces of FLASHING 12, END ON END, BLINDSIDED, and a really awkward song from CLAW HAMMER. Over all pretty decent, but I'm not saving my pennies to purchase anything from these bands in particular. I'd hate the commitment. (MM)
(Northeast, PO Box 412226 Eagle Rock, CA 90041)

V/A - "74 More Minutes Underground" CD

Looks like most of these twenty three bands hail from SoCal, and there's a wide range of styles from punk and hardcore to modern rock to pop and techno!?!!! This CD starts off punk then slips into a lot of mediocre to crappy pop/modern rock tunes, a metal tune and back into punk. Highlights include BLUE COLLAR SPECIAL, the FRANKENBURIES, REGAL BEAGLE, FIFTY-TWO, 3 SKIN and the NICOTEENS' four final recordings. Overall, an odd bunch of bands for a comp. (HM)
(Northeast, PO Box 412226, Eagle Rock, CA 90041, northeastrecords.com)



V/A - "At The Dive '99-'02" CD

Twelve punk/garage bands dish up 2 songs a piece on this slice of the Portland scene. It's far from "Portland's best" as the cover claims, but it's still a pretty cool comp. The best tunes are from the 86ERS, FILTHY ANIMALS, SPICOLI'S, FLIP-TOPS, SPEDS, and the HUNCHES. (HM)
($6 ppd: Dirty River, 4838 NE 40th Ave, Portland, OR 97211, http://members.fortunecity.com/dirtyriverecords)

V/A - "Deadly Encounters Vol. 2—An International Compilation" - EP

Nice picture on the cover of a happy looking mob overturning a cop car (wouldn't you be happy, too?) sets the pace for this compilation of core devastation. The styles range the gamut from hardcore to total grind, noise-core to extreme noise. Standout tracks for me were CAPTAIN 3 LEG, DISNEY VIOLENCE, UNHOLY GRAVE, BENUMB, CRIPPLE BASTARDS, N.O.Y.F.B. (covering CRIPPLE BASTARDS), HATED PRINCIPLES, and NEW YORK AGAINST BELZEBU (from Brazil). Listen to this a few times in a row and you'll be ready to overturn cop cars in your own neighborhood. (WM)
(Perplexing, P.O.Box 6052, Burbank, CA, 91510, perplexkill@hotmail.com)

V/A - "Genoa 2001" EP

This compilation, which benefits those who were imprisoned during the G-8 summit protests last year in Genoa, contains some of the finer current class of anarcho-punk bands. AFFLICTION from France starts things off with a driving mid-tempo scorcher which sort of brings to mind Germany's LOST WORLD. Melodic with female vocals, yet harsh and rough in all the right ways. SIN DIOS continue on with their blasting Spanish hardcore attack, which always wins me over. DIR YASSIN from Israel deliver us two tracks of rocking hardcore punk, a bit more mid-paced and sing-along than we previously found them. Germany's KOBAYASHI raps things up with one track of very classic sounding German punk, which is very akin to a rawer version of later SLIME. Great comp and great cause—comes complete with a booklet describing the reasons behind the benefit, and the reasons for opposition to the G-8. (MT)
(Malinke, Stedinger Str. 58, 28203 Bremen, GERMANY, malinke19@web.de)

V/A - "H.S.S.R.R. 3-Way Split" CD

Holy fuck what a raging little disc this is! This release was put out to support HELLNATION on their recent tour of Japan. It combines the eye watering speed of HELLNATION, SLIGHT SLAPPERS and REAL REGGAE all together for a brutal attack on your eardrums. HELLNATION provide six studio tracks and all of the other tracks from the other two bands are live. The quality of the live stuff was surprisingly good for being two hyper fastcore bands. So all you thrashheads should check it out. (RC)
(MCR, 157 Kamiagu Maizurum Kyoto, 624-0913 JAPAN; dance.ne.jp/~mcr/)

V/A - "Loud Sound from Silent Town" EP

This all Finnish compilation gathers four bands for your listening pleasure. ABYSS OF DESPAIR, KAATOPAIKKA, PARAQUAT and HATECREW. The bands here play a variety of hardcore grind and crust. While nothing on this EP really stood out, nobody on it really sucked either. (RC)
(Snailhead, Santtu, Pohjalainen, Majamaenkatu 3 05820 FINLAND; abyssofdespair@hotmail.com)

V/A- "Six Weeks Omnibus: a Japanese Hardcore Compilation" LP

Awesome comp, featuring six Japanese bands with a handful of songs apiece. Beautifully packaged, with a poster. I like the format—much more effective for giving a sense of the bands' sounds than one song per band. SOUL CRAFT, GOUKA, CIVIL RIGHTS, FLAME, EXHALE, S.C.U.M. Not a sampler, but a roll call that might otherwise go unanswered. (AC)
(Six Weeks)

V/A - "Things You Own End Up Owning You" EP

Very nicely done comp. of four solid hardcore outfits: TEMPERS RISE, FOODCHAIN, STRIKE OUT, and POLICE LINE. I enjoyed the A-side of the record a bit more with TEMPERS RISE making me think of a later BORN AGAINST/early PORTRAITS OF PAST hybrid, and FOODCHAIN delivering some ultra-fast melodic hardcore with extremely high pitched yelling. Very nice. STRIKE OUT and POLICE LINE are a bit more straight-forward cookie-cutter hardcore. Its good for what it is, but not that interesting. A very nice EP to say the least. (SP)
(Too Circle, c/o Shingo Maeda, 3-29-18 Toyotama-minami, Nerima-ku, Tokyo 176-0014)

V/A - "Thrash Ahoy Extra" CD

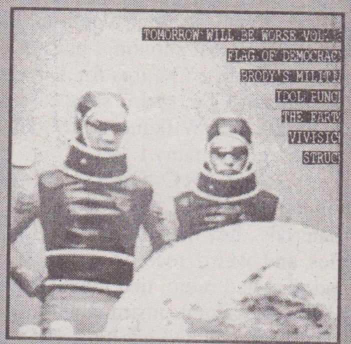
Just like the cover says, this CD is about the need to "break the speed limit." The music speed limit, that is. This CD compiles tracks from eighteen bands including POWER OF IDEA, UNHOLY GRAVE, SOCIAL CRIME, ABSTAIN, UNKIND, INSANE'N THE BRAIN, LESS HAZE and many more. Most of the bands on here are from Japan, but there are a few from other countries. And it should be known that every song on here totally fucking rips! So would you like your ears to be assaulted by 41 songs worth of insanely fast thrash and grindcore? If you answered yes to that question I would advise you to buy this compilation immediately. Killer stuff! (RC)
(Paul Lesneski, PO Box 11571, Oakland, CA 94611)

V/A - "Tributo Ao Olho Seco" LP

It still amazes me to no end the phenomenon that was the global hardcore scene which erupted circa 1983—borders between folx were shattered and people all over the world shared their sentiments of alienation, frustration and disgust with the world through the language of raging hardcore punk way before the internet made this such a common and easy thing. Amazing. It was at this time that OLHO SECO came into the world playing über-harsh and unrelenting thrashing punk. This comp finds seventeen bands from all over the world coming together to pay tribute to one of the best hardcore bands ever. Highlight performances being by AGROTOXICO, ACAO DIRETA, FDS, and FORCA MACABRA. Good stuff. (MT)
(Dirty Faces, Univertitatsstr. 16, 44789 Bochum, GERMANY, www.dirtyfaces.de)

V/A - "Tomorrow Will Be Worse Vol. 3" 3xEP

I was super excited to be assigned the newest installment of the "Tomorrow Will Be Worse" compilations. The first two volumes of the series were great, especially because they included bands that rocked in all different ways, not just several bands of the same sub-genre. The third volume is a perfect collection of bands to go along with the first two. FLAG OF DEMOCRACY plays great melodic anthems. IDOL PUNCH plays awesome spazzy and sloppy melodic shit. VIVISICK plays fucking great fast hardcore with awesome high-pitched vocals. BRODY'S MILITIA plays straight to the point thrash. The comp also features the FARTZ and STRUCK. This comp is so so so good. I recommend it to those who appreciated the first two volumes, or to anyone interested in some badass punk rock hardcore shit. (WR)
(Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017)

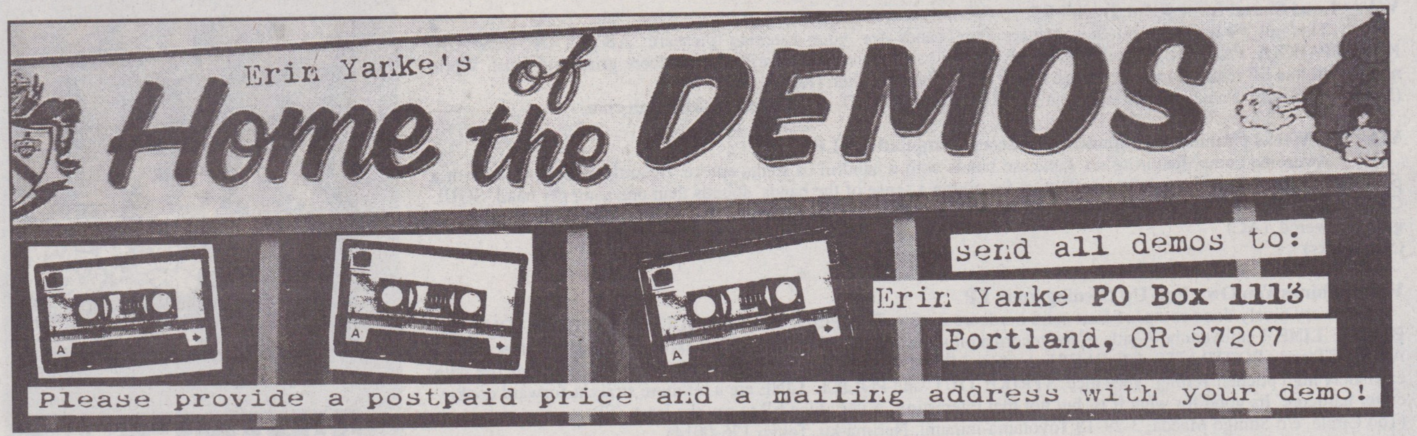


V/A - "Twenty Years of Dischord" 3xCD

What can be said? This is brilliant. This is punk rock history. This is more than that—it is a living document of the sonic evolution of a scene. 20 years on and still true to not only their ethics but also the subculture which spawned the label. Fuck, I'll admit that I haven't liked a FUGAZI record since *In On the Kill Taker*, and that most of the records they release these days don't find their way into my collection—but I will never discount the sheer threat by example that is Dischord. The example that you can succeed by following your heart, and supporting your community and that you don't have to play the music industry game of promotional hype, greed, and ego. You *can* do things on your own terms. That is their legacy. That is what this box set means to me. That and fucking 21 unreleased tracks from the likes of MINOR THREAT, VOID, SOA, SCREAM (can you say "Holy fuck, this song smokes"? I think you can), YOUTH BRIGADE, FUGAZI, FAITH, GOVERNMENT ISSUE, and DEADLINE amongst others. Did I mention live footage of FAITH, DEADLINE, VOID, SOA, TEEN IDLES, and UNTOUCHABLES? That's just on the third CD in the package—the other two serve as greatest hits (and misses) spanning the label's twenty years of existence. A booklet giving a detailed yet brief history of the label, complete with photos, flyers, ads, and record artwork from each release rounds out the package. An inspiration to us all. Fucking amazing. (MT)
($25 ppd: Dischord, 3819 Beecher St. NW, Washington DC 20007-1802, www.dischord.com)

V/A - "You Call This Music?! Vol. 2" CD

If you are one for CD compilations, or looking to hear a bunch of Will-approved punk rock bands, check this one out. There's tracks from plenty of great bands, both active and inactive. Bands like TOYS THAT KILL, SPAZZ, OPERATION: CLIFF CLAVIN, FOUR LETTER WORDS, THE DEVIL IS ELECTRIC, JAG OFFS, and BIKINI BUMPS make this comp worthwhile. Besides these bands there are about 30 other bands some of which rock, some of which are pretty good, some of which suck in a big big way. The art is awesome, done by Fly. If you have three bucks and you're looking to hear some cool bands, you should certainly check this out. Be warned that most of the material from the bands I mention is previously released, so this is probably best for those who want to hear new bands. (WR)
($3 ppd; Geykido Comet, www.gcrecords.com)



APHASIA play pretty fast with no nonsense, and they manage to capture the sound of being really pissed off. When the woman sings, it reminds me of the singer from ASF, but they never got this straight forward aggro. The male vocals are of the groaning guttural school. (5 song cassette, lyric sheet. 7209 Penn Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15208.)

JERK FRONT mix up good mid 80s Midwest thrash pace, thinking of TOXIC REASONS's faster songs, with some West Coast early 90s melodies. Plus they sing in German, in a guttural fast speaking tone, almost shouting, but not quite that forced. Quality. (3 euros for 1, 5 euros for 2 cassettes or CDs, ppd. 7 song cassette, lyrics included. Z Wilkauer Str. 25, 90491, Nurnberg, Germany.)

KLARC QENT is a one-man band style project, made with 95% recycled materials...hey there's Art Bell! Lots of samples and weird records, prank phone calls and recycled radio, tied together with music beds and actual instrumentation, but not much. Jim laughed out loud about the felching comment, and although it's not maximum rock and roll, it's funny and clever. ($3 ppd. or trade for like-minded recordings, comics, or "selected zines." I can't define that for you. 25 song CD, no lyrics included. PO Box 58674, Cincinnati, OH 45258.)

A MOMENTS LOSS are a moody mixture of super emo vocals, and textured long instrumental parts, with some chugga chugga guitar stuff thrown in. Reminds me of something that would be on Excursion. (3 song CD, no lyrics included. 3010 Bobby Dr., Reno, NV 89502.)

MANIAC play a mix of styles, and like a fruit salad, they are supposed to all go together and complement each other. They mix some fast raging hardcore parts with that rap/rock mix style of singing, but then things veer back towards driving punk rock, then some sample comes in, then a more electronic part, and I could just go on and on, because they change styles that quickly. (19 song CD, explanations included, but not lyrics. 10561 Regent Cr., Naples, FL 34109.)

THE NOVEMBER GROUP are of the emo hardcore realm, but there are melodic bits mixed in here and there to surprise you. They're tight, polished, and with lots of tempo changes. The vocals are gruff and shouted, but not always, and the backups are usually guttural and drawn out. Nice packaging. (3 song CD, lyrics included. 5036 7th Ave., NE, Seattle, WA 98105.)

PILGER are total positive core, sounding like they should have been from the East Coast about 8 years ago...an equal mix of DC and Boston. Cleanly produced and shouting vocals, tight music, and a song called God Free Hardcore. ($2 or 1 English Pound. 7 song CD, lyrics included. PO Box 295, Southhampton SO17 1LW UK)

RICE, from San Diego in the early 90s, was a thematic band about rice, the grain, and how it was the fuel for the revolution. They were a great counterpart to the revolutionary antics of the NATION OF ULYSSES. This is an outtakes, and live songs retrospective, sloppy and crazed, and a good representation of how they actually were. (11 song CD, no lyrics included. PO Box 150491, Brooklyn, NY 11215.)

SNOTMASK is a lo-fi hardcore band, mostly fast, but sometimes drudgingly slow and sometimes as fast as they can go. Lots of screaming over the music bed of chaos. Songs are short, and would fit on an old *BLEEEAAARRRGGGGHHH* comp nicely. ($2 ppd. 14 songs listed, "plus a shitload more" says the cassette cover, lyrics for 5 of them. 6676 N. Bendel, Fresno, CA 93722.)

SPITFACE play fast and furious, but clear and clean hardcore. They remind me of ALL OR NOTHING, but the vocals are a little more guttural female style, and they've got lots of group back ups. Also, they play a MINOR THREAT cover. (6 song CD, lyrics included. 2804 Vinson Ave., Sarasota, FL 34232.)

THE STRUGGLE are a hardcore band, and they don't want you to forget it. I wouldn't disagree with them, but I think for the most part they play the mosh part of your standard hardcore song. Not particularly fast, but you can easily move to it. The singing is really from the gut, even when he goes higher pitched. Lots of back up vocals, too. But they have all this Y-town pride, and not once do they let the ignorant, like myself, in on which town is Y-town. Fix that minor detail and this is a hit. ($5 ppd. 7 song CD, lyrics included. 86 Skyline, Canfield, OH 44406. They also have 4 song tapes for $3.)

THE TEARDROPS play low key rock, that mixes acoustic and electric instruments. Keyboards? Yes. Acoustic guitar? Yes, but also electric. Steady drums, keeping the ol' beat where it belongs. They don't ever get too wild, but these sound like moody songs, good to drive to. The vocals style is an amalgamation of all your favorite creepy guy singers, like a mix of Ric Ocasec (the CARS), and Jeffrey Lee Pierce (the GUN CLUB). ($1 ppd. 6 song CD, no lyrics included. 4122 Village Ct., Annandale, VA 22003.)

UNLUCKY ATLAS is the quietest and moodiest band of the month. They seem like they've got a mix of acoustic and electric instruments going on, including those that rarely appear in the demo review section like cello. Sometimes the electronics take over the songs completely. The vocals are breathy and rainy day sounding, both the male and female ones. (10 song CD, lyrics included. 10561 Regent Cr., Naples, FL 34109.)

VIRGIN MEGA WHORE sounds like a pop band from simpler times, with sweet vocals, kind of dreamlike psychedelic girl style, ebbing and flowing. Sometimes they punch up the tempo and the rock, but mostly not. (6 song CD, no lyrics included. 1388 Haight St. #249, San Francisco, CA 94117.)

VOICE YOUR OPINION plays thrashy hardcore that clocks in at a smidgen below blazing. It's driven by the drums more than the guitar. And, for all the thrash going on, they still get melodic here and there to break it up. They've got a deep-voiced guy singing that does more shouting, but during this one song you can hear the progression from shouts to high pitched screaming, Incredible Hulk sort of mood change. Cool! ($2 ppd. 7 song cassette, lyrics included. 1925 Ginger St. #222, Oxnard, CA 93036.)

WACO FUCK seem chaotic as fast as you can lo-fi grindcore, but they make all the stops and starts together, and that in itself is impressive. The slower parts are pure metal, and the fast parts are whiplash. The vocals are high pitched yappy dog barking style, but, of course, really fast. ($2 ppd. 7 songs and bonus live tracks on this cassette, lyrics included. 2506 Via Rojo, CA 92008.)

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NIHILISTICS LP

Re-release of this seminal New York hardcore punk band's 1983 debut album pressed onto vinyl. The Nihilistics originally hailed from Long Island, but gigged around Manhatten in clubs like A7, CBGB's, and the Mudd Club, and appeared on the legendary New York Thrash compilation with the Beastie Boys, the Mad, and the Bad Brains. Through their wild live shows, they developed a reputation as one of the most damaged and misanthropic bands in New York City.

THE SKABS: AGED TO PERFECTION CD

Vaudevillian deathrock with a carnivalesque, new wave sound from this veteran NY band. Says Punk Planet: they "should play with the Faint, but they'd probably scare the audience."

THE BAD FORM 7"

The debut disk of a maniacal whirlwind of rock n roll madness from this NJ band. Followed up by an appearance on TMU's "Troubleman Mix Tape" and an EP on the Youth Attack label. Too well versed in early hardcore and dissonant no wave to be able to be called a "garage rock" band in good faith.

Upcoming (ca. December '02):

Out Cold/ 9 Shocks Terror split LP

Urban Waste– re-issue of old material !!!

THE HUNGRY EYE

(available through MATW and its distributors)

THE VANISHING 12" EP

An EP of remixed songs from the new San Francisco death-disco band with Jessie from the Subtonix. LP out now on GSL records. Out Dec '02/ Jan '03

THE VANISHING & PHANTOM LIMBS SPLIT 7"

A split disk of the West Coast's two premier current deathrock outfits. Out Dec '02/ Jan '03

More releases on the way!

DS-13 'NOBODY'S GONNA THANK YOU WHEN...' CD
comp CD = all comp tracks, one sided 7", 1st & 2nd 7", unreleased, & a live set. 40 tracks total. 'VAD VET VI OM' LP/CD just repressed

DUMBSTRUCK 'IF IT AIN'T BROKE...' 7"
repress of their 1st 7", ex RIPCORD

E.T.A 'WE ARE THE ATTACK' 7" & 'NO FAITH' LP/CD
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FUCKED UP 'NO PASARAN' 7"
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HAYMAKER LP/CD & 'HATE THE KIDS' 7"
Pushead artwork on LP/CD ex-leftfordead. ACE

OURxWAR 'IF YOU'RE NOT NOW...' 10"/CD
pissed off, straight forward SXE hardcore

HACKSAW 'TURNED UP, WAY DOWN' LP/CD
total power, total cool, total rock & roll

OUTCOLD 'WILL ATTACK IF PROVOKED' LP
their 5th and best lp – straight forward US H/C

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north american press, all new – all solid

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LAST IN LINE 'CROSSWALK' 7"
debut record back in press

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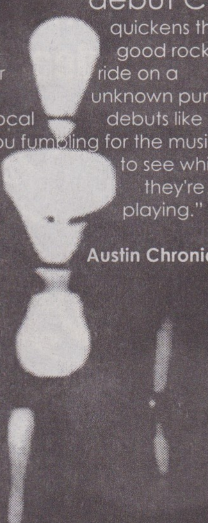

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The Austin Chronicle

"Neoteric punk/wave with early 80s so cal punk tendencies like "Mommy's Little Monster" era Social Distortion "Abolish Government" era TSOL with some Black Flag/Gregg Ginn solos."
www.blankgeneration.com

"Mid-paced, good lyrics, intelligent production with shifting vocals and non-cliché guitar squeal.
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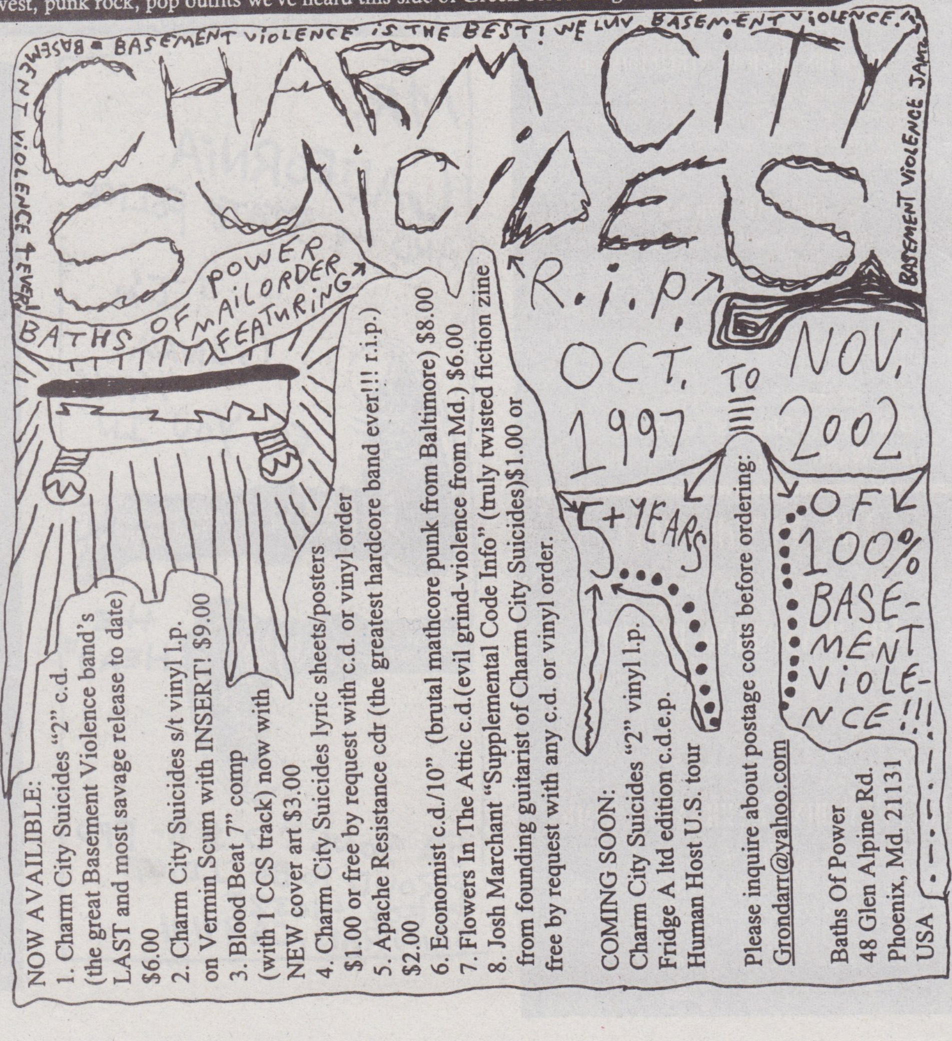
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ZINES

Reviews by: (AC) Arwen Curry, (AR) Aragorn, (JB) Julia Booze, (CB) Chanel Bowman, (KC) Karoline Collins, (BD) Ben Ditch, (MD) Mikel Delgado, (SD) Sara Double-Ears, (GF) Gardner Fusuhara, (JH) Jeff Heermann, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (CJ) Chloe Jensen, (JM) Jeff Mason, (JL) Jennifer L. Mushnick, (NN) Nellie Nelson, (MN) Mimi Nguyen, (CR) Casey Ress, (MT) Mike Thorn, (GZ) Gordon Zola.

Please send your zine in for review. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and post paid price. If you want us to include a foreign post paid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

ANGERBOX #3 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 60 pgs
Arwen took a photo of Carlos at the SF Zine Fair at Cell Space a month ago. In it he has the quintessential "zine face": a beatific grin of appreciation. I thought of that happy personal moment while reading *Angerbox* #3, in which Carlos writes about his bout with depression and ultimate recovery in a wise and informative tone. This kid has done his research. Zines seem to me to be the perfect medium for dealing with issues like this, by presenting a real voice that incorporates the often contridictory emotions one can feel and that "Help" books often lack or overlook. By utilizing a mixture of quotes, journal entries, and clinical information plus resources, a layered and complex dissection, not to mention a true method of coping is acheived. Pick this one up and read it with the Anti-Depression issue of *Doris*. (SD)
PO Box 24262 / Los Angeles, CA 90024
carlos_angerbox@disinfo.net

ANTI-AUTHORITY #1 / $1
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 60 pgs
The teenagers who put together *Anti-Authority*, a contributor zine, rely heavily on the Interweb for content as well as their basic information about punk rock. Unfortunatly they get their information from MTV.com and their clothes from Hottopic.com. The inconsistent tone, with one article questioning why local bands in their town would protest the Warped Tour followed by an article denouncing capitalism and political greed, made me squint and cringe. (SD)
Jenny Snider / PO Box 39 / Hall, NY 14463

BANAL EXISTENCE #2 / $1.50
8.5 x 11 - copied - 40 pgs
Nice cut and paste layouts, lots of political questions in the interviews with Consume, Atrocious Madness, Whorehouse of Representatives, Amdi Petersens Arme. Plus reviews. Really good except for the conspiracy thories about the Pentagon crash etc. Not that it isn't interesting, just that I've seen it too many times already. (GF)
2706 Harvard Ave E / Seattle, WA 98102

BREAK THE CHAINS #12 / $5/sub (6 issues) Free to Northwest prisoners
8.5 x 11 - copied - 12 pgs
Prison support newsletter for the Pacific Northwest. This issue has an interesting summary of speeches given by released political prisoners Chris Plummer and Bo Brown. Also includes news and information on lots of other political prisoners and short articles on the harassment of anarchist prisoners and the struggles of some Native American prisoners. Much improved from the last issue I reviewed. (GZ)
PO Box 11331 / Eugene, OR 97440
Gumbycascadia@yahoo.com

BULL SHEET #8 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 40 pgs
My, what a fancy computer you have. The overdone layout of *Bull Sheet*, which could be a straight-forward punk/skate zine, made the text hard to read and let me down when I did plow through the arty parts only to find a lame interview that was a personal joke. Band interviews, skate contest newsy story, plus the usual record reviews. (SD)
2846 Evergreen St / Abbotsford BC / V2T 2S1 / Canada

CHERRYBOMB #1 / $5
8.5 x 11 - copied - 59 pgs
A women produced zine focused on those rad things that women do, uh, which is everything, right? Cut and paste with computer layout and cutsey graphics in an anthology format that includes stories, poems, paintings, fiction and photographs. I was struck by the interview with Lily Fearless, a performance artist who sits on the street and answers peoples' questions. I have a friend who wants to do a similar project, asking the questions instead of answering them. She was going to call herself The Question Lady and set up a tent downtown. I've got great admiration for those who invite every crazy sicko to come and hang out with them. (SD)
No address

CHIHUAHUA & PITBULL #1 / $3
4.25 x 5.5 - copied - 26 pgs
This is truly my desert island zine. First of all, it came in a bottle! At first I tried to get the cork out, then I decided the beauty of it was the ephemeral nature of its packaging. Luckily my high expectations for the zine weren't shattered along with the bottle. Honestly, I thought this zine would hella suck because it had too good of a gimmick but it is up there in my top ten, EVER. Witty, tragic, death-defying: there are stories about being stuck in a Catholic boarding school, traveling out to California, and gory beach trips. I loved the way Ethan

describes in "South" his turns at the wall, his defiant response to the painting scenario, and his hopes for Hurricane Motherfucker. "West" was a story of traumatic misunderstanding that shocked me in all the right places. Inspiring, clever and great for party tricks. (JB)
Ethan / 4306 Burgundy / New Orleans, LA 70117

COLOUR OF SHADOW #2 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 60 pgs
Graffiti zines are often the absolute worst zines out there. Shitty reproductions from other magazines, too dark photos, and an affected self-righteousness ooze from their pages. *Colour of Shadow* fortunately is none of these. It is well presented and without much editorial commentary, allowing instead for the photos of posters, murals, and bathroom writing to speak for them selves. Each section focuses on a tiny space filled with little messages, such as Cell Space's phone booth, 949 Market's murals, and the Uptowns' bathroom, my personal favorite spot to write inane messages after a few pints. This is a great zine. (CR)
523 25th St / Oakland, CA 94612

COMET Volume 2 number 1 / $5
8.5 x 11 - printed - 74 pgs
I have to admit that I am a sucker for this kind of zine. It's not really my scene but it totally appeals to my aesthetic sensibilities. *Comet* comes from the vaguely alternative urban art scene and includes an envelope of prints, a color cover of an art installation and a back cover from the Cannes film festiveal. The content of this issue hinges on the theme of uncompromising people and includes Ian MacKaye, John Law, Sapphire, Minnette Lehmann, and the band Down River. The interview with Ian is introductory, but the interview with John Law was really interesting. Generally the content is very good with some weak spots (poetry and the like). I look forward to seeing more issues of this one. (AR)
3388 22nd St / San Francisco, CA 94110

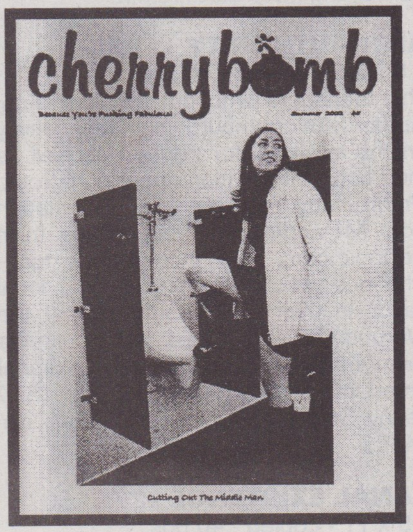
COMIXVILLE #3 / one stamp
4.25 x 5.5 - printed - 26 pgs
Sort of like the zine yearbook for comics, this self-described "quick, little guide to self-published comics," gives short and to-the-point reviews along with excerpts from the comics themselves. The editors have done a good job of weeding out the lame and boring sludge, bringing you what seems to be the cream of the crop from the past half year or so. A variety of comics are reviewed, ranging from artsy and meaningful to simple and charming. Get this if you're into comics and looking for something new to read, or go ahead and send them your own comics... I dare you. (CJ)
PO Box 697 / Portland, OR 97207-0697

DEADBEAT #1 and #2 / Stamps, trades, donations
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 24 pgs
A new South Florida punk zine. Issue #1 profiles the Mary Tyler Whores and Bad Religion, #2 provides information on NOFX, The Misfits, NY Dolls and the Hellacopters. Two things make this zine hard to review positively: #1 I don't think a woman punk is mentioned in either issue and #2 The Germs and Sex Pistols on the "worst punk bands" list with Blink 182 and MxPx and no explanation. Uh, no. But it's pretty new so maybe *Dead Beat* will get better with time. . . (GZ)
400 East Atlantic Blvd #16 / Pompano Beach, FL 33060
Downinflames@attbi.com

DEADBEAT # 3 / 60¢ stamp / trade / donation
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 30 pgs
Contained within these pages you shall find band bios of Screeching Weasel, Descendents, the Mummies and more. Is it just me or does a lot of this stuff look like it was downloaded from peoples websites? Or maybe Mike just has his own website that looks identical to this zine. Well whatever, a lot of the other stuff in deadbeat is actually really cool. Mike Thorn once said that we, the punks need to demonise George Bush jr. in the same way as we did with Reagan. I couldn't agree more and that's why the 15 reasons why you should hate your president section is my favorite part of this zine. There's also some record reviews, top ten lists, book reviews, show reviews and a punk news section plus some other surprises.(BD)
400 East Atlantic Blvd # 16 / Pompano Beach, FL 33060

EAVES OF ASS #1 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 40 pgs
I enjoyed many things about this anarchist-oriented zine including the critiques and mockery of commies, the interview with M1 of Dead Prez, the CrimethInc. information, and the personal anecdotes. I liked that the content is not solely punk-identified but still speaks to many of the same issues that punk culture values and concerns itself with but from a different cultural orientation (hip-hop). The commentary and critical reflections on some of the screwy power dynamics that permeate "activist culture" are worth reading too. I highly recommend this zine. (JL)
PO Box 406784 / Louisville, KY 40204

EVERLONG #3 /£1
5.5 x 8 - copied - 70 pages
This zine, all the way from the UK, was pretty interesting. When I looked at it I



thought "Oh..the Casualties" with a bad-ass female bassist from England with a trihawk on the cover. To my surprise, this zine was really well done.

There are minimal amounts of pictures which made it less interesting, but at any rate, the writing was well done and it was good to read about the alive punk scene in Europe. On the back cover there are a bunch of mohawked, studded punks in a bar in Ireland. What more could you ask for? (KH)
1 Shilton Close / Kingswood / Bristol / BS15 9UZ
Shane.Baldwin@uwe.ac.uk

FAGGO #3 / $4 US, $5 Canada and World (age statement?)
8.5 x 11 - printed - 44 pgs
Vancouver-based punk and queer zine in the tradition of Outpunk and Homocore. Highly recommended. There's lots of good stuff in here: critical looks at "Pride" and San Francisco, interviews with the Skinjobs and Demien of Undertow, a short history of tattoos, some porn, contacts, reviews and *lots* more. Everything in here is written well and worth reading, I wish I could say that for all the zines I get. *Faggo*, and you might expect this given the name, is mostly boy-oriented but not in an exclusive way. (GZ)
(Faggo is moving so please e-mail for address information)
faggo@hotmail.com

FISH WITH LEGS Special Edition / $1 + stamp or trade
8.5 x 11 - copied - 24 pgs
Painstaking but honest. There are choppy anecdotes and opinion pieces in here that delve into the mind of Eric Lyden. My favorite was the Fun Facts, because they really provide a synopsis to the entire collected works of this guy. They read like a personal letter to one's feet. You have to admire someone who owns a diabetic cat and gives it an insulin shot every day. (JB)
Eric Lyden / 224 Moraine St / Brockton, MA 02301-3664
ericfishlegs@aol.com

GADGIE #15 / **UGLY MAN PUNK ROCK** #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 28 pgs
Gadgie has an interview with MTA, which I enjoyed and then some stuff on football, some TV show and being chased when you're a little kid. *UMPR* had some thoughts on the scene, 9/11 and communism. A little naive, frankly. Still I enjoyed some parts of each of these zines. (GF)
Danny / 65 Clarke Court / Wyberton, Boston, Lincolnshire / PE21 7EF / England

GAME OF THE ARSEHOLES #5 / $2 or ¥500
8.5 x 11 - printed - 24 pgs
From the moment I saw the words "Thrash Silly Magazine" on the cover, I knew I was gonna like this. Despite my relative ignorance in the realm of Japanese hardcore, I was able to appreciate this zine just because Stuart's writing is so fucking enthusiastic. You can tell that this dude loves himself some hardcore. He details his trip to Japan (including the almost-religious experience of a Gauze show) and provides a pretty comprehensive list of Japanese raw hardcore bands from the past and present, including pictures and flyers as well. The part I liked most was the fact that at the bottom of every page the mantra "It was easy. It was cheap. Go and do it." was repeated. Although apparently traveling to Japan is neither easy nor cheap, this zine still makes it sound like a whole lot of fun. (CJ)
Stuart Schrader / 9 Fenwick Rd / Whippany, NJ 07981

GET ON THE STAGE #8 / $5
8 x 6 - printed - 84 pgs - Serbian
Although the language is difficult, especially the crylic script, nevertheless this is a well written and easy to read zine. Most of the interviews are with bands that are familiar to many of us outside Serbia, including The Deviates, Cigar Death By Stereo, Dead 50's, and Windfall. There is also an interview with Wolverine Records, and an article on National Socialism. The ads and lots of the reviews are also of USA bands, still it is fun seeing that the punk scene is alive and well in a land the USA bombed just a few years ago. (HH)
Vladimir Orescanin / Aleksandra Stojanovica 9 / 22300 Stara Pazova / Yugoslavia
stagezin@yahoo.com / oresc1@ptt.yu

HIGH HEELS SLUT #5/ 3 Euros
6 x 8.5 - copied - 54 pgs.
Hold still while I lace up my high-heeled sneakers...this 'zine is, like many, concerned with all comings and goings in the world of no-brow rock 'n' roll...the usual record reviews go up against the Dirty Sweets, the Smut Peddlers, Superhelicopter Ltd., the Horrors, and Ragin' Hormones. Thick, compact and thoroughly grubby. (JH)
Retard Wim / Wagenbrugstraat 91 / 8560 Moorsele /Belgium
cottenier.wim@yucom.be

IT'S A SQUARE REVOLUTION #9 / ?
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 16 pgs
Smudged and full of emotion, *IASR*, flows from page to page as one single poem to a friend. A sweet ode of inspiration that promises that it is "not edited, even a little". (SD) Lacy Davis / PO Box 221602 / Carmel, CA 93923

JOURNALSONG #5 / $2
4 x 5.5 - copied - 96 pgs
As the name would suggest, *Journalsong* reads like a series of journal entries. However, unlike in many other cases, this is not a bad thing, in fact, it's pretty entertaining. Steve gives the reader a glimpse into his world and holds you there with scattered rantings about family, travel, girls and hanging out in cafes in Portland eating way too many everything bagels. Every story is nicely complimented with illustrations by the mysterious Nicole who is only mysterious because I don't know what her last name is. My friend Julia says that #5 is a lot better than the previous four issues in that it is more sincere and personal. I of course wouldn't know because I haven't ever read it before. However, it's worth picking up, and its nice to finally get a zine to review that isn't all about music. Oh yeah, one more thing. I disagree with the coffee monastery theory. a place where you have beg for just one cup and refills aren't free? But then, you live in Portland

where that isn't a daily reality like it is here in the bay area.(BD)
PO Box 3444 / Portland, OR. 97208-3444
journalsong@hotmail.com

...LET'S GET FREE #1 / $?
8.5x11 - copied - 14 pgs
This is a zine about Jeff "Free" Luers an "earth defender, anarchist and political prisoner." "Free" is currently serving a 22 plus year sentence for a number of felonies related to eco-sabotage including arson of SUVs on a Eugene car lot. This zine includes lots of positive press from political publications as well as interviews, poetry, art, and articles by "Free" himself. Even reading this with a critical eye, it convinced me that "Free" got an exceptionally long sentence due to his politics. On a side note, I'm still trying to figure out if someone named "Free" being jailed is metaphor or irony. Anyone?. (GZ)
c/o Break the Chains / PO Box 11331 / Eugene, OR 97440
Breakthechains02@yahoo.com

LISTEN TO THIS #2 / $1?
8.5 x 11 - copied - 24 pgs
This collection of four short stories contains writing that I assume is somewhat autobiographical in the way that it drew me into the emotional immediacy that is detailed in each piece of writing. Stories focus on layers of human dynamics and what seems to buried within the ways that people interact with each other. I did not expect to enjoy the zine because I am typically not into zines containing prose, but I found this one compelling and very moving. (JL)
PO Box 1661 / Pensacola, FL 32591

THE LITTLE BLACK STAR #17 / a stamp
5 x 8 - copied - 4 pgs
I'm quite fond of this biweekly newsletter. This edition details opposition worldwide by governments to recent US military plans, the executive branch's dreams of crushing the free press and having their friends loot American forests of board-feet. Ideally, you could steal stamps from your job and subscribe. (JM)
PO Box 197 / Lewisburg, PA 17837

LIVE AND LOUD #1 / ?
8.5 x 11 - printed - 12 pgs - spanish
Interviews with The Buisness and The Test Tube Babies plus show reviews make up this small Argentinia music zine. Decent photos and graphics. The insert letter requested records so they could have reviews in the next issue. (SD)
Mariano Miramontes / Casilla de Correo 4578 / CP 1000 / Capital Federal / Argentina
liveandloud@hotmail.com

THE MATCH #98 / Free Subscriptions (but donations accepted)
5.5 x 8.5 - printed - 80 pgs
The Match is "a journal of ethical anarchism" that's been published for over 30 years. I often judge publications by their letters section. Does a political zine just print the boring press releases and petty corrections it receives, or is there debate, discussion, and/or signs of life there? From the 20 pages of letters contained within, it's clear that many people read and care about *The Match*. That I believe more in a tradition of communal anarchism that differs from the editor's individualist ("ethical") one, doesn't stop me from always reading *The Match*. Other anarchists could certainly learn from the idea that it's a good idea to create a publication that actually engages with people. As in every issue, *Match* #98 is concerned with losses of freedom, police abuse, battling authority, and the means and ends of political debate. This issue contains pieces on "Violent Student Syndrome," Harry Potter and the public library system, lots of publication reviews, and much more. (GZ)
PO Box 3012 / Tucson, AZ 85702

MATTER #2 / $1.50
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 58pgs
Okay, so my one complaint about this zine is that the interview with the production company Pass Me a Beer Productions is really long. What makes up for it though is the DIY record case section. I already have a DIY record case made out of an empty Pabst box but maybe I should show this to roommate so he stops leaving his records all over the floor. Matter contains everything a well rounded zine should have. Interviews with local bands that no ones ever heard of as well as more well known bands such as the Casualties, a good mix of politics and opinion, music interviews and other fun stuff like cartoons and crosswords. Keep up the good work.(BD)
Kyle / 1415 NE 87th St / Kansas City, MO 64155

MISHAP #13 / $2 (donation)
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 68 pgs
I would file this under political personal rantzine. Lots of commentary on everything from why the author does not trust authority (because they lie, who-da thunk it?), to some local bike path, to anarchy, punk rock and trans-phobia. Generally the author seems like he is starting out on his process of thinking about political subjects, but he appears

to be doing it in a very appropriate and social way. It would be nice to see the direction this takes over the next five years. (AR)
PO Box 5841 / Eugene, OR 97405

MISHAP #13.5 / $2 (donation)
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 48 pgs
This is actually the reason why I am so hopeful for *Mishap* in general. The author actually rewrites (or emulates) Lovecraft's brand of science fiction for the punk rock world. The story does actually feel Lovecraftian with the appropriate conclusion of everyone sitting in chairs, howling at the moon and hiding from demons. This is a fantastic thing and I can only hope that more people take this sort of thing further. (AR)
PO Box 5841 / Eugene, OR 97405

NEGRITA #2 / $1
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 40 pgs
A short but powerful zine that addresses sexism, fasting, racism, and traveling all in a very personal and first hand way. I much prefer reading about someone's feelings and experiences than their interpretations and theories, and *Negrita* does it well. I hope that Gloria will continue to challenge people through her writing and not feel that she should worry about offending whitey, ('cause whens the last time whitey worried about offending you?). Rad zine. (CR)
PO Box 1661 / Pensacola, FL 32591

NIGHT SWIM #1 / $1
5.5 x 4.25 - copied - 30 pgs
I do enjoy "snapshot" zines. The sort that fail to offer any real context or clarity, but rather serve as a brief chapter in the writers life. *Night Swim* is one of these zines. I enjoyed it but felt that the story was a little too obtuse, a little too undeveloped to really get into. The story in this zine is her traveling from Oakland to Seattle and back, the whole time suffering the aches of unsatisfied love. I hope that the next issue introduces a little more background, and that the Polaroids turn out a little better in the copying process as well! (CR)
Lacy Davis / 5276 Broadway Ave / Mailbox 30 / Oakland, CA 94618

NO MAN IS A RIKER #4 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 24 pgs
This is the anti-God issue. Sean writes that religions cause wars, terrorism, the oppression of women and homosexuals, and other bad things. This issue also includes bible stories, arguing with godpunks, God as the biggest cop of all, and lots of reasons why Sean hates all gods. The comics, one about Wally George and the other starring "Fetus, the talking fetus" who is all-knowing and lives in a toilet bowl, were my favorite part. (GZ)
PO Box 1273 / Cypress, CA 90630
Reverandsean@litmusgreen.com

PLASTIC BOMB #40 / $7
11 x 8 - printed - 124 pgs - German
If this zine isn't the fucking bible of German punk rock it fucking ought to

be. Tons of shit in these 124 pages including interviews with the bands Zumbis Do Espaco from Brazil, La Ciudad Loca from Venezuela, Loikaemie, So What! Rawside and Bad Religion. There are also articles on Afganistan, and Korea a continuation of articles on the birth of punk rock in Germany and a review of a punk art exhibit in Berlin. Finally of course there are lots of cool columns, lots of new record reviews, lots of super cool ads, and a free 31 song CD sampler that isn't half bad. (HH)
Postfach 100205 / 47002 Duisburg / Germany
www.plastic-bomb.de

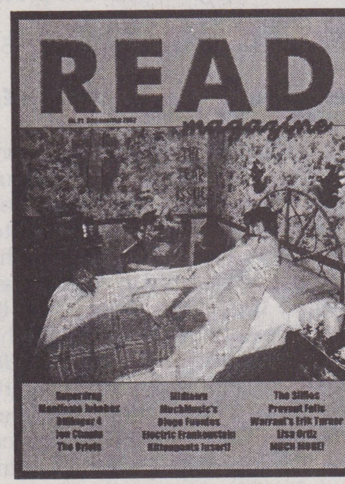
POP BANG LEMON MERINGUE #3 / 3 stamps
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 20 pgs
Ben writes with a strong personal voice. His conversational tone mixed with an artful use of language makes these simple stories of summer and travel engaging. Highlights include gas station coffee crisis and the arrival of summer. Small comics that read like short annecdotes are scattered throughout the zine. (SD)
Ben / 2026 Green St / San Francisco, CA 94123

PROBATION AREA #1 /$2
5.5 x 11 - copied - 18 pages
One word: Pretentious. This zine is so pretentious, it makes me laugh. I was riding BART when I began to read this zine. I'm sure the folks around me were amused by my facial expressions while reading this... I have no clue who wrote this. A group of people, a male. a female, a doctor, a punk rock kid, who knows! I started to read and it began with a list of random words all in a row "Try, Break, Knife, Spy, Leave, Teethe, Flit, Lip, Sigh, Shit" and each 'story' or page had something to do with those words...for example "Shitting." Yes indeed folks, this invisible person wrote his/her feelings on shitting in the most pretentious way.(KH)
PO Box 332 / Chapel Hill, NC 27514

RAUMSCHIFF WUCHERPREIS #9 / $4
11 x 8 - printed - 60 pgs - German
This zine is more of the Scumfuck tradition, a punk scene that has been around forever. This zine is half interviews and record reviews, and half catalogue. Still it is fun reading, and definitely a place to keep up on the German punk scene. This issue has interviews with KrawallBrueder, Reazione, and everyones favorite band Pobel & Gesocks. Finally, there is the Wucher News where one can read the latest gossip. Definitely, a cool zine and don't forget to pick up a copy of the new CD "Berlin Punk Rock 1978-

1989" on Weird System Records whose ad is running in this zine. (HH)
Postfach 100709 / D-46527 Dinslaken / Germany
scumfucktradition.de

RAZORCAKE #10 / $3
8.25 x 10.5 - printed - 96 pgs
Although the columns took up almost half of the zine, and there were more ads than you could shake a stick at, I still enjoyed reading this. There was a very long, informative, and interesting article on Emma Goldman (who also graces the cover), and amusing and endearing interviews with Against Me!, the Epoxies, The Fuse!, the Von Steins, and Michael Moore. Actually, some of the columns were pretty good, but others were just too much. I'd buy this zine if I was into the bands that were interviewed, but otherwise I'd probably skip it. (CJ)
PO Box 42129 / Los Angeles, CA 90042



READ MAGAZINE #21 /$4
8 x 11 - printed - 100 pages
When I opened this zine, I had a fishy feeling I wasn't going to enjoy it much. Your basic reviews of upcoming albums, your basic Dillinger Four interview, and your mighty fine NOFX full-paged advertisement on the back. But once I opened up to the "50 punk rock pick up lines" I couldn't stop laughing. Punk rock pick up line number 42: "You only read *Maximum rock'n'roll* for the ads too??" and number 16: "I love you from A to Zine". Genius. Other than that it's not that bad, but not that interesting. Good toilet reading.(KH)
PO Box 3437 / Astoria, NY 11103
readmagazine@aol.com

XRUDEXBOI!X #? / ?
8.5 x 11 - copied - 72 pgs
While reading this straight-edge oi/ska/punk fanzine from Paris I was constantly trying to figure out if the oi bands were saying fucked up things or if they were the "good" skins; my 7 years of high school French is so basic that I can't make out those complex conjugations. I went into the kitchen and asked Mike. We figured out that none of the bands seemed dodgy through my stuttering French and his vast knowledge of punk rock. Lots of interviews as well as an enthusiastic reviews section, news of the European scene, and a few exuberant photos of skinheads beating each other up, plus some soccer hooliganism. (SD)
Rudeboi / BP77 / 75623 Paris / Cedex 13 / France

SCANNER #12 /$2
5.5 x 8 - printed - 84 pages
This zine wasn't all that bad. It was packed from page to page with good information on the music scene and definitely had some good interviews with bands such as Dillinger Four, Toys That Kill, and Recess Records. It definitely got my attention and kept me entertained. Based out of the UK, I was surprised at all the up-to-date American independent music info they had. The layout was great, and the cover was even better. Instead of a bothersome glossy cover, it was a soft paper that I had never encountered before. Awesome.(KH)
6 Chatsworth Drive / Rushmore Park / Ipswich / Suffolk / IP4 5XA, UK
Scanzine@aol.com

SHAZZBUTT! #10 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 36 pgs
Interview with Trepan Nation, stuff from the internet and silly stories round this out. Didn't do much for me. (GF)
Mark Novotny / 207 John St / DeKalb, IL 60115

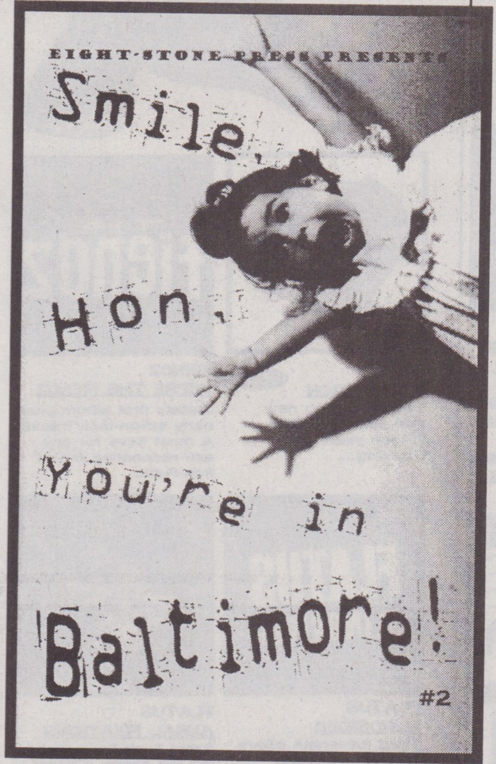
SLOUCH #2 / $2.50
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 28 pgs
"Employment" is the theme of this issue and highlights include a copy of the editor's annual review at her former place of employment, minor sabotage by a Starbucks employee, and reflections on an "activist summer camp" orchestrated by the Ruckus Society. I found the piece on the "activist summer camp" interesting in how it identified issues of white supremacy and hypocrisy within radical, lefty, activism that at times sounded really dogmatic in the author's responses but compelling in his willingness to reflect on issues of privilege in ways that I find rare. Overall, *Slouch* is a well put together mixture of humor, absurdity, personal reflection, and insights that is very readable. (JL)
Slouch / 610 A Cole St / Box 22 / San Francisco, CA 94117

SLUG #162-164 / free in SLC
8.5 x 11 - offset - pages vary
I imagine that *SLUG* (an acronym for Salt Lake Undground Gazette) occupies a position of pride atop many SLC toilet tanks. It's a free local mag that treads a fine line between punk/rock/indie 'zinehood and advertiser-driven newspaper. Features on local and touring acts, music news and general counter-cultural muckraking. Odd that features on "women rockers breaking gender barriers in Utah" coexist with what's essentially a *SLUG*-sponsored beauty contest ("enter this year's Slug Queen competition!"), but maybe I've just lived in the Bay Area too long. All told their hearts are at the proper place. (JH)
2225 S 500 E St 206 / Salt Lake City, UT 84103
www.slugmag.com

SMILE HON, YOU'RE IN BALTIMORE #2 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 52 pgs
You may take this as either true identification with an author's work, or otherwise, but I puked in Alamo Square (3 times!) after finishing this zine. There are a few different stories, the main one, "One More Drop of Poison" is all about

the adventures of a group of cynics on St. Patrick's Day. The drinking never really stops, which might account for the somewhat removed manner in which the stories come out. I felt as though the choice moments were obscured by the author's delivery. His style is dry yet inclusive, and elegant at points; still I found it humorless with his inability to attack the stories. The highlight incident was when Bloomberg tried to lock Nemetz in the bathroom of a McDonald's, and it came out feeling like I had to be there. The fact that it is a

clean, book-like zine with page numbers and beautiful graphics makes it easy to read, but I only recommend it to those who appreciate bars. (JB)
Wiliam P Tandy / PO Box 963 / Havre de Grace, MD 21078
esp@leekinginc.com

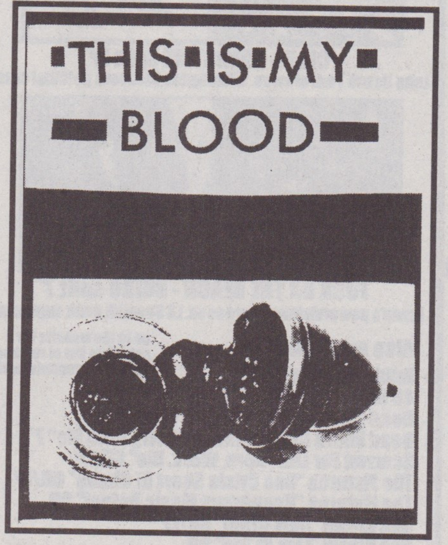


THIS IS MY BLOOD #1 / trade or donation
7 x 8.5 - copied - 40 pgs
Yep, a zine all about menstruation. Informative for those in Canada looking for outreach and resources in their community. Lots of poetry, some cool graphics, cramp relief recipes, a few gross out stories like keeping your blood and putting it on toast or a birthday cake, and an almost commercial fervor for "keepers". Most of the stories are about first periods and how much periods suck. (SD)
Gabriela c/o Scarlet Tide Brigade / PO Box 21530 / 1850 Commercial Dr / Vancouver B.C. / V5N 4A5 / Canada

UP MAGAZINE #5 / $7
11 x 8 - printed - 52 pgs - Dutch
There is lots of punk rock in this professionally put together zine. There are interviews with the bands Snapcase, Vandals, All Systems Go, Sick Of It All, Flipsides, Dreadlock Pussy, and lots of others. There are also the usual assortment of record reviews and full page ads. And of course as usual the zine comes with a CD sampler featuring most of the bands interviewed. (HH)
Postbus 4269 / 5604 EG Eindhoven / Netherlands
www.upmagazine.nl

VINYL A GO GO #? / $1 or 3 stamps
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 36 pgs
"At times Roxy's vocal inflections hold the ability to unleash an aural orgasm so powerful it will cover your jeans in day-glo stripes and polka-dots, whilst blasting a pair of new wave plastic glasses onto your head and simultaneously wrapping your torso in electric tape." The entire zine is written like this. This freak likes the dirty pop rockandroll new wave stuff and he seems to be coming in his pants while writing every sentence. There is an interview with The Rock and Roll Adventure Kids, and then pieces about the Briefs and Epoxies. Lots of enthusiasm, a bit too much for me... (GF)
Lewis Houston / 135 Wapwallopen Rd / Nescopeck, PA 18365

VOICES WAKE US #3 / $1 or 2 stamps
5.5 x 8 - copied - 44 pgs
I loved the first issue of this Danzig-lovin' zine, straight outta the Columbia dorms in NYC, but found #3 to be somewhat a letdown. There's a decent interview with Tear It Up and a pretty good one with a French metal band, a write up of Samhain, rants against mainstream media coverage of punk, a history of the editor's go-



nowhere band, and some record reviews. I can't get worked up over Spin being a shitty magazine, Samhain is not as much fun to read about as the Misfits, and the band history wasn't especially entertaining. If you're in it for the interviews, you'll get a cheap good read, but the other material isn't so strong. (JM)
c/o Ben Parker / 5290 Lerner Hall / New York, NY 10027
voiceswakeuszine@hotmail.com

WE ARE EVERYWHERE 2002 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 56 pgs
This is a recommended political prisoner "best of" compendium (compiled from the monthly *Break the Chains* zine). If you are interested in getting involved in some of the best political work available (and your politics lie in the anarchistic/ecological direction) then this gives you access to writings from Rob Los Ricos, Free, Critter, Marilyn Buck, Anthony "Tigger" Vaughn, Dale Morris, and more. There are also updates on prisoners cases, analysis of the OR prison system, and more. Recommended. (AR)
PO Box 11331 / Eugene, OR 97405

WONKA VISION #19 / $2.95
8.5 x 11 - printed - 100 pgs
There's not much here for me to be stoked on. There is a ton of material—fifteen interviews, columns, reviews, and shit on 80s movies. Of the fifteen interviews, three are punk bands (and I'm being generous), two on Fat Wreck Chords, and they also talk with Jello, who successfully dodges the question, "are you patriotic?" There's a good talk with the guy who put on the Asbury Park Skate & Surf Fest, who dodges the question "how much money are you making from this?" The remaining interviews are with "indie" rock bands and people discarded from major labels, and short talks with some spoken word artists. I think this is a publication for those stoked on club shows and $10 doors. (JM)
PO Box 63642 / Philadelphia, PA 19147
www.wonkavisiononline.com

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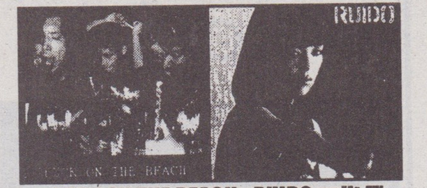

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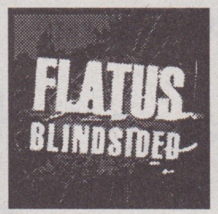

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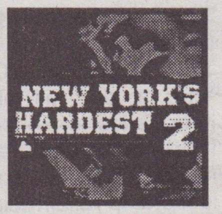

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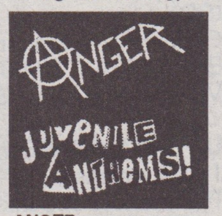

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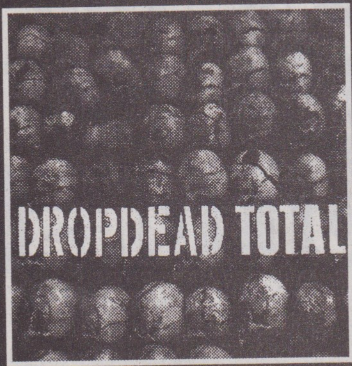

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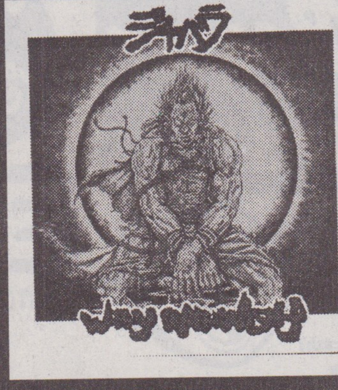

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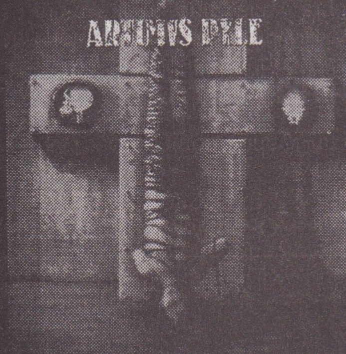

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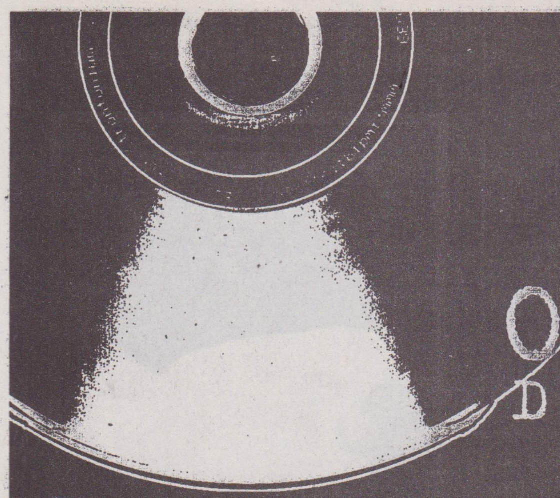

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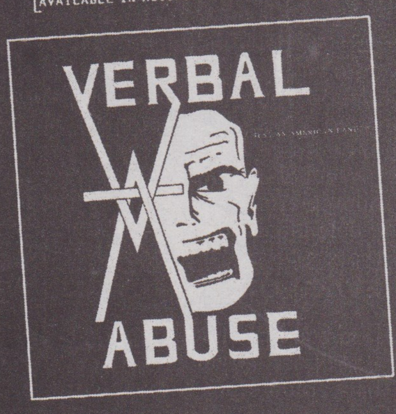

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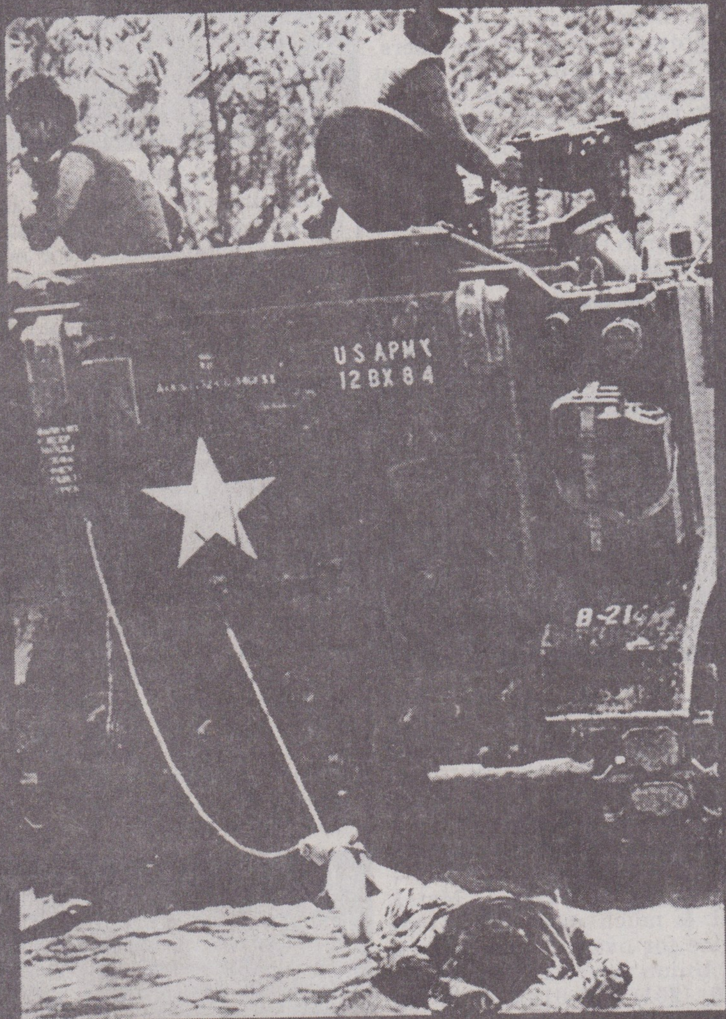

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